Women Martyrs of
The Indian Revolution
(Naxalbari to 2010)
Part-1

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Let Us Realize the Dreams of the Great Martyrs

We are presenting here the poignant life histories of undaunted courageous and ever inspiring women who were martyred in the struggle for New Democratic Revolution (NDR) in India, since the historic Naxalbari armed peasant rebellion which burst forth like a 'Spring Thunder' in 1967. The great Naxalbari rebellion, the armed agrarian revolution itself was not an isolated phenomena and it had erupted in an international background of earth-shaking events. Particularly, it was inspired by the Great Debate against modern revisionism of Kruschev & Co. and Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched under the leadership of Mao in China. Naxalbari had broken the back of the modern revisionism, mainly that of CPI (M) and shown the real path of liberation for the oppressed masses of India.

The spring thunder of Naxalbari was a clarion call for the oppressed and exploited people of India. It showed them the path for liberation. It has been forty years since six peasant women, two children and a peasant had laid down their lives in Naxalbari while fighting for land and life with dignity – their liberation. Then onwards oppressed people of our country have begun to write a new history of their own through their own class struggle and with their own hands to reach their ultimate destiny which paves the way for the liberation of entire mankind from all clutches and prejudices of class society. This all-encompassing history is tremendously influencing all spheres of our society, the polity, economy, relations between different social classes and communities, family, culture, literature and ecology. The history of oppressed women is the real history of the dearest daughters of our beloved country which is an inseparable, vital component of the history of oppressed people. And no success in the revolutionary war or the final victory of the revolution is imaginable or possible without women. Hence, the need to study their history. These life histories are an inseparable part of this people's history.

In these long-drawn forty years, the Indian revolutionary communist movement had gone through many ups and downs and twists and turns.

After the setback of Naxalbari struggle, the CPI (ML) party split into many streams. MCC was the other revolutionary stream which stood by the slogan 'Naxalbari Ek Hi Raasta' (Naxalbari is the only Path) and built a revolutionary movement in some states. Of the many splinters of the

CPI (ML), CPI (ML) (People's War) and CPI (ML) (Party Unity) stood by Naxalbari politics and built revolutionary movements covering some states. These two parties merged in 1998 and formed the CPI (ML) [People's War]. Finally on September 21, 2004 the two main streams of revolutionary communists – the MCCI and the CPI (ML) [People's War] merged and formed the CPI (Maoist) and thus a strong single centre to lead the revolutionary movement finally emerged. In the 37 years of class struggle and people's war of these two main streams before the merger many comrades had laid down their precious lives for the victory of NDR in India. The villages, towns, soils, furrows of fields, collieries, woods and mountains, rivulets and rivers of vast India turned red with the warm blood of these thousands of immortal martyrs which included hundreds of women comrades. In the thorny and tortuous trajectory every success, experience and the unity of the party could be achieved only through their innumerable sacrifices. It is the base on which the party stands today and endeavors to advance the People's War. It is by paying homage to their glorious martyrdom that the unity was cemented. Now, the CPI (Maoist) is advancing in the path of protracted people's war and striving to develop guerilla war into mobile war and to develop People's Liberation Guerilla Army into People's Liberation Army with the aim of establishing Base Areas.

It is the duty of every communist to pay tribute to the memory of martyrs by continuing the unfulfilled tasks till the victory of communism. People are always inspired by the sacrifices of martyrs. So it becomes our bounden duty to propagate about their great qualities, which we have to emulate, their lives and their ideals, among the vast masses so that they are inspired to join the liberation struggle to carry forward and realize their lofty aims.

July 28 to August 3 is celebrated as Martyrs' Memorial Week to commemorate the martyrs and take a vow that we will follow their footsteps with renewed vigor and determination. We are using this occasion to give the readers a glimpse into the lives of women martyrs. It is really sad that we could not collect the life histories of all the martyred women comrades. CPI (Maoist) is leading a revolutionary movement which is spread over a vast area and that too it is concentrated in the most backward and remote pockets of India and is working under severe repressive conditions. So, one of the main reasons for the unavailability of their life histories is the fascist repression it is facing. We have made an effort to compile the whole list of women comrades martyred from Naxalbari to 2009. We are giving the available life histories and list of women comrades martyred in

this period as far as we could gather. The list is more or less complete but there are some more women comrades who were martyred during the state sponsored Salwa Judum, the counterrevolutionary and terrorist military campaign unleashed by the Chhattisgarh and central governments. We could not get in time their names and details. Some more women comrades also were killed recently in encounters with paramilitary and other armed forces in various parts of India whose details we could not obtain due to the war like situation prevailing in these areas as part of Operation Green Hunt. We would definitely try to overcome these shortcomings in the next edition. But meanwhile we thought it would be useful and inspiring to bring out as many life histories as possible on this solemn occasion when we commemorate our beloved martyrs.

Here we have compiled in two volumes the life histories of women revolutionaries who were martyred since Naxalbari to 2009 under the leadership of those streams of the Indian revolution which merged into the CPI (Maoist) in 2004. In the first volume we have included the life histories of women martyrs from Naxalbari to September 2004. In the second volume we have included the life histories of women martyrs from September 2004 to 2009, i.e., since the formation of CPI (Maoist). The life histories of women martyrs of CPI (Maoist) and some of those who were part of the genuine democratic and progressive movements have been recorded here.

When we look at the lives of these women martyrs many things strike us as extremely significant. The NDR in India is led by the working class and peasantry is its main ally. So the majority of the martyrs belong naturally to the peasantry. In the Srikakulam armed agrarian revolutionary struggle, which was the major armed struggle of the Naxalbari period, there were 17 women martyrs. The most prominent among them was Panchadi Nirmala who has inspired and is still inspiring generations of young women to join the revolution. Altogether the total number of that period will be in dozens. But after 1985 and especially in the 1990s and in the new millennium their numbers reached hundreds. And more than two hundred women comrades have laid their invaluable lives just in this past six years since the formation of the new party. The protracted people's war (PPW) doesn't advance along a smooth and straight path and its nature of momentum is always zigzag. So this reality is reflected in these life histories too. They represent the many ups and downs and successes and failures experienced by the revolutionary movement. The Indian ruling classes

have always used brutal force to suppress the revolutionary movement. They have launched many a suppression campaigns one after another and have deployed lakhs of police and paramilitary forces to crush the movement in the most heinous ways possible. The brutality of these forces is on par with the brutality of most suppressive forces in the world. No surprise, most of the women martyred in the movement died while fighting these forces. They died in real encounters and fake encounters, both of them illegal according to the existing constitution. Guerillas have been surrounded by the mercenary forces which are many times over and above their strength and have been fired upon without any warning or any effort to arrest them. While some died in face to face battles, some of the women guerillas were caught with injuries in different types of armed confrontations. Many of those who were caught with injuries were gang-raped, tortured and killed in cold blood. Many women revolutionaries were caught unarmed in villages and towns and killed in fake encounters. Many of them had been jailed and some died due to the tortures and the abysmal jail conditions.

It was not just the women guerillas who died at their hands. Many unarmed women activists of both over ground and underground mass organizations (peasant, worker, women, cultural, youth, student etc) have also been killed in cold blood either by the police, paramilitary or by vigilante gangs sponsored by the reactionary governments. Unarmed urban women activists who organized the working class, urban poor and various sections of urban people were caught, cruelly tortured and killed. There are both professional revolutionaries and part-time party activists among those who died.

Apart from these comrades, some comrades have died due to illness and in accidents (accidental fires, thunderbolt, snake bites, drowning etc). Some died during child birth. In one sense, these deaths are also caused due to the severe inhuman repressive conditions prevailing in the main struggle zones or states. People and revolutionaries are dying due to non-availability of medical facilities in those backward areas and the embargo imposed by the enemy. The fascist governments are putting restrictions even on sale of medicines in these areas and harassing the doctors who treat the revolutionaries, even killing them some times. A woman dying during child birth is due to the lack of any kind of pre-natal and ante-natal care in the backward rural areas even after more than six decades of “independence”. So, we can say most of these deaths are

also caused by the callousness of the ruling classes or manmade.

There are women of all age groups among these martyrs ranging from babies to women over 60 years of age. Some were mothers of children, some were pregnant and some had just given birth. Many teenage girls were killed too. Neither age nor their physical condition deterred the police from killing them.

As one goes through this book, one would find a wide spectrum of women belonging to oppressed classes, castes and sections among these martyrs. More than ninety percent of these martyrs belong to the most oppressed classes and oppressed castes from the rural areas. It comes as no surprise as New Democratic Revolution is waged in the vast rural tracts with the strategy of liberating villages as a part of area-wise seizure of power and surrounding the cities, ultimately liberating the whole country. So agrarian revolution is at the core of this revolution and naturally the women of oppressed classes and castes are the main revolutionary social force. Some women belonging to the working class and urban poor had also been martyred.

A considerable number of women belonging to the petty bourgeois classes and sections like students, intellectuals, employees have also been martyred. The specific feature to be remembered about these women martyrs coming from a petty bourgeois background is that they have realized that women's liberation in India or anywhere in the world is not possible without the liberation of the overwhelming majority of peasant or working women and so had joined the agrarian revolution. They left their homes, life styles and class baggage behind and completely integrated with the rural women populace, educating them and getting educated in class politics in turn. Comrades Snehalata, Kurnool Padma, Nyalakonda Rajitha, Parvati of Karnataka, Ellanki Aruna, Suguna (Mahboobnagar), Anuradha Ghandy, were some of the most popular and illustrious leaders from this genre. Anuradha was an ideological and political leader of the party and had developed to the level of CC. Rajitha was a state committee member. Padma, Suguna and Aruna were on their way to become state level leaders at the time of their killing and later would have developed as central level leaders. Rajitha, Aruna and Suguna were great military and political leaders of the movement and Padma was one of the best organizers the party had ever produced and was a political and ideological leader. She worked mainly in the urban areas amidst severe repressive conditions and is one of the main architects of the urban women's

movement in AP from 1989 to 1994. Anuradha was the in-charge of the Central Mahila sub-committee and comrades Padma and J. Savitri were members of AP Mahila Coordination committee. These were structures formed by the party to specially concentrate on developing revolutionary movement, to develop women comrades and tackle problems of patriarchy in the whole revolutionary camp. So one can calculate the loss the women's movement had suffered with their deaths. Both Padma and Savitri were killed by the brutal AP police. It is noteworthy that Anuradha and Padma had particularly strived to build friendly relations with other democratic and progressive women's organizations and individuals in the country.

Revolutionary women organizations were built in the villages of forest and plain areas and also urban areas and these organizations had mobilized thousands and lakhs of women in various struggles and political movements. Thousands of them are active participants in the People's War at various levels. These women organizations, the women leaders of these organizations and the party women organizers who are the motive force behind them have been specifically targeted by the ruling classes and many have been killed in fake encounters and massacres of people. Scores have been killed by the dozens of vigilante gangs sponsored by the armed forces in all the struggle areas, the most notorious of them being the Salwa Judum in Chhattisgarh and Sendra in Jharkhand.

On the other hand, when we look at some of the incidents we can gauge how the fascization of the armed forces and entire state has risen to unprecedented heights. It even looks as if the state is exceptionally cruel towards women. In the bizarre Manala covert killings three women comrades (along with another seven male comrades) were very cruelly tortured after they became unconscious from the sedatives mixed in their food and then killed them. The whole scene was so ghastly that people were terrified when they saw the mutilated, mauled bodies. In the Aguruguda encounter three women comrades were killed. In Sangidigundala, six women comrades were brutally gunned down. Out of them three were Chenchu adivasi young girls and the other three were also young women from a poor peasant background. In the Seshachalam Hills encounter also six women comrades were killed. This was also a covert operation. In the Daraboyinapenta encounter (in which the AP state committee secretary Com. Madhav was also killed) five women comrades had laid down their lives. In the Gunukuralla encounter, three women died fighting the police bravely. The notorious AP Greyhound commando

police did not spare even an old mother of four children. They tortured and killed Eswaramma in a fake encounter after she was arrested. The fake encounter of seven unarmed teenage girls at Sathrajpalle would go down in history as one of most cruel killings. The only crime these girls committed was trying to organize themselves into a women's organization to address their grievances as women.

Nayan's child in Naxalbari, Biddika Chandramma's six-month old baby in Srikakulam, Mounika, a 2-year old child in Nalgonda district, 3-Year old Beronica Titoya in Jharkhand, 10 year old Oyam Bujji in DK are just a few names of children who have lost their lives to the brutality of the police. In fact, their numbers would be more if we meticulously gather all the details about the repression in the struggle zones.Some women lost their lives for being family members of revolutionary activists or for giving them shelter. Haseena Begum and Niranjana of NT were killed for this. Avalam Lakshmi (DK) and Manthena Rajavva (NT), both old women lost their lives just because they resided in the movement areas and happened to cross the way of the armed forces.

The number of women dying at the hands of the various vigilante gangs sponsored by the state are also increasing. And these count as some of the most macabre killings ever. Belli Lalitha was a great singer who worked in the cultural movement for Separate Telangana. She was hacked to 17 pieces by the most notorious black gang of AP led by Nayeem and those pieces were thrown into various wells. The gruesome murder of Malati and Lakshmi in Bhitar Amada by NASUS would make one shudder. Badki Devi of Jharkhand was strangled to death by the reactionaries. All the women killed as part of Salwa Judum come under this category. The spiteful killing of Kumme and Chaithe in DK by killer gangs as part of Operation Green Hunt (OGH) in 2010 by raping them and hacking their necks indicate what is in store for women activists from such gangs. Their bodies were purposefully left naked. Some women comrades lost their lives at the hands of coverts (Santha of AP, Manala women martys of NT). Many coverts had been given targets by the police officials to kill the women leaders in particular.

In many incidents, the AP and DK police raped women comrades who were injured in encounters and then murdered them. This is the lowest level they can stoop to in bestiality. If this sounds horrible then when we hear about the atrocities the poor, adivasi women are subjected in DK, particularly during Salwa Judum (SJ), there would be no words to describe

the horror. The kind of hatred with which their breasts and private parts were attacked has perhaps never been witnessed in this scale in India in Maoist revolution. When we remember the fact that these adivasi women had to wage bitter struggles with their men to cover their breasts and private parts properly with cloth, we may perhaps understand why those parts are so particularly targeted. All along, ruling classes all over the world have always used rape and sexual violence on women as a weapon to suppress people's movements and SJ is an appalling continuation of that policy. Whether it is the DK adivasis or AP Chenchu adivasis or Jharkhand Santhal adivasi or Odisha Kond adivasis or the dalit women in the various plain and suburban areas, it is always the poor, backward, lower caste women who are becoming victims of state repression. Their only crime was to try to take their lives into their hands; to try to liberate their people. In SJ, they particularly targeted Kranthikari Adivasi Mahila Sangathan (KAMS) leaders and members, members of peoples' militia and Cultural front and common women. India, which boasts to be the world's largest democracy, doesn't even allow poor adivasi women to organize into women's organizations for their fundamental rights. It is high time the world sits up and expresses indignation at this appalling condition. One should note that the revolutionary women's movement of India is one of the main and widespread women's movements in the world and in India apart from the nationality women's movements in Kashmir and Manipur.

These women martyrs were inspired by Maoism and the revolutionary movement. The reasons for their joining the movement may vary but one common feature we find in them is their aspiration to be liberated from patriarchy and to liberate all women from patriarchy. Most of them were themselves victims of patriarchy and some of them though not as oppressed had consciously joined as they felt Maoism provided the answer to the eradication of patriarchy. So when we go through the life histories of these extraordinary women, we find that they fought patriarchy in society, in their comrades in arms and also in themselves.

The women revolutionaries have been victims of patriarchal psychological war of the ruling classes too. They have been put down as sexual victims of their male colleagues. Their personal lives have sometimes been derided with all kinds of slander as part of the foul propaganda unleashed by the ruling classes' psychological warfare, an important component of the Low Intensity Conflict strategy to crush the

Maoists. The irony is that even some women (very few) who claim to represent the interests of women have swallowed this propaganda uncritically and wrote articles with the same tenor. The fact is that revolutionary movement has the avowed aim of fighting patriarchy and encourages women to fight it at all levels. One cannot explain the huge participation of women in the movement if the above had not been true. The revolutionary movement had never claimed there were no manifestations of patriarchy in the party, people's army, or in the revolutionary camp. In fact, it has released documents explaining its origins and the forms it gets manifested in and even created some specific forms to fight it like rectification campaigns against patriarchy apart from the regular criticism-self criticism sessions. The lives of these martyrs are testimony to the above facts and we hope these would dispel some of the doubts which lurk in minds of some people about women being victims of patriarchy in the movement. Such a view does not see these women as active participants in the revolution or as makers of history and only sees them as 'victims'. Doesn't this view represent one of the most disgusting forms of patriarchy too? The lives of these martyrs not only show how they had fought patriarchy but also how to fight against it till its elimination or its complete eradication from the face of the globe. With their glorious lives they had demolished every kind of feudal and bourgeois stereotype about women in all the fields and this is no ordinary feat for the 'backward, uneducated' peasant, dalit and adivasi women or the 'fragile' petty bourgeois women.

One more thing we want to emphasize about the lives of these martyrs is the extremely difficult conditions in which they had worked and died. They braved it all with sheer determination and their aspiration for a better society for all the oppressed masses of India and ultimately for the establishment of a classless society in the entire world. The daily lives of these women are full of circumstances which require extraordinary grit to continue. In the severe repressive conditions, they had to go without food and water, go without sleep and forego all kinds of comforts. In the plain areas, they had to walk the whole night and take shelter in a small secret place with almost no movement in the daytime. In Telangana they used to take shelter in the homes of the peasants and they had to be so secret that they had to urinate and defecate inside the house into pots. They would be disposed only in the night when they go out of the shelters. Taking bath was an extremely risky job and could cost you your life. Some

comrades had died fetching drinking water for the squad as water points are ambush spots for the police. One can imagine what the women comrades in the plains in those severe repression days went through when they were menstruating. They had to work under constant physical and mental pressure amidst police combings and mopping up campaigns. None of them could be counted under the category of 'healthy' women and had to survive with all kinds of diseases and illnesses including gynecological problems, not to mention the omnipresent, constant companion – the dreadful malaria resulting in severe anemia. Some had surgical operations for various ailments and worked under severe physical constraints. Their commitment to the people is unparalleled and worthy of admiration.

After the setback of Naxalbari, women comrades like Chittekka of Srikakulam, a veteran comrade who served people for above forty years till her last breath had worked under severe repressive, discouraging and hopeless conditions. Chittekka's life is so full of inspiring episodes that she deserves a whole book or novel in her name. They were part of the pioneer comrades who had revived the revolutionary movement in India again from scratch after the setback of the Naxalbari, and Srikakulam, Bhirbhum and other struggles. Their unflinching confidence in Maoism even under such difficult conditions is exemplary and worthy of emulating. Many women comrades had lost their loved ones in the movement but continued with redoubled spirit, vowing to carry on the lofty aims of their beloved life partners. Some have married again but lost that partner too. And all this at a very young age. In some incidents both the husband and the wife had died in the same incident (both in real and fake encounters). Some of these are very young couples. Some of these martyrs had lost a brother/sister/relative in the movement. Bhagyalakshmi's and Nagamani's (AP) brothers were martyred before them. There are some comrades who have a relative in the enemy camp too. Morri Lakshmi (NT) killed her own brother when he turned covert and damaged the party. Such vertical divisions in the family could be seen mostly during the SJ fascist campaign. Some martyrs had lost their limbs or were injured in firings (some of them more than once) but nothing could dampen their spirit. Some of them could not get treatment in time due to the repression and so had to undergo a lot of pain and some even had to carry on with disability due to this delay.

Majority of the women comrades, particularly the guerillas had chosen

not to have children. Some of them had children when at home and had left them to join the movement. Some gave birth to children in the movement but left them with somebody and dedicated themselves to the people. In one sense, they have shattered the myth of 'motherhood' concept imposed on them by the feudal society. They have proved with their practice that communist women do not love or care for only their own children and that they love and take care of all the children belonging to the oppressed masses. These 'mothers' left their own children and worked and died for the bright future of all the children in this world. Another myth that some of these comrade have shattered is that women follow their husbands whatever they may do. Comrades like Padma, who developed into a Divisional Committee member in Adilabad district, Santhi of Nallamala in AP did not leave the movement till their last breath even though their husbands abandoned the movement. This shows their higher level of class consciousness and their immense commitment of these comrades towards the people. The women comrades in the revolution are the pioneers for building new man-woman relations in the party, army and in society. They are steeling themselves in the class struggle and are also establishing new relations and new values through their practice in the class struggle. Establishing new man-woman relations is also part of this all-encompassing class struggle. Some martyr couples or martyr comrades had forever remained as models to follow in man-woman relations.

Among these martyrs we would particularly like to highlight the life histories of those senior women comrades who had dedicated their lives for decades together for the revolution and had almost remained nameless till their death due to the nature of their work in the technical mechanism formed for the protection of leadership and other tasks like press, weapons production etc. Comrades like Bhagyalakshmi (technical mechanism, AP), Vijayakka (technical mechanism, AP), Narmada (Weapons Production, DK), Jilani Bano (technical mechanism, NT) are just a few names. They spent years together in these works withstanding all kinds of difficulties and problems in that life. It was a sacrifice on their part because as communists they would have always preferred to work among the people and not spend their lives in some secret den. Matta Rattakka was the first woman comrade from the plains to come to DK and work there. Later she worked for many years in the technical mechanism and then she again came back to DK and died in an encounter while working there. Rajeswari

of Karnataka, another senior comrade, left her job, joined the movement and edited party organs from underground. The revolutionary movement considers the life histories of all those veteran women comrades as treasures to be preserved for the future generations and always urges the younger comrades to learn from their lives, works and from their long-standing commitment and steadfastness in the face of umpteen numbers of difficulties. The very mention of their long revolutionary lives fills one's heart with a warmth and inspiration which the younger comrades should hold on to very dearly.

Comrades belonging to various departments of the party, PLGA and Janathana Sarkar were martyred. There were computer operators (Swetha, AOB), tailors (Gadapa Sarita, DK), teachers (Madhavi, AP), doctors (Karuna, AOB; Anju, JH; Kamala, DK), technicians (Narmada and Sunita, DK), press workers (Chaithe, DK), agriculture workers (Kumli, DK) etc among the martyrs. Their contribution in these various fields which are an inseparable part of the ongoing PPW is unforgettable.

The readers would find that there are a few comrades who had committed suicide. It is really one of the tragedies of the movement that some comrades had committed suicide in spite of being in the revolutionary camp. They had been active in their fields and had a great promise in them. The movement had rescued many women in the society who were on the verge of suicide and we can only imagine how many more would have committed suicide in the villages if not for the revolutionary women's movement. So a woman committing suicide while being in the revolutionary camp is to be taken seriously. The revolutionary movement takes these incidents seriously though they are very few in number because they show where the weaknesses of those comrades and that of the movement lie. The movement reviews these incidents to avoid such occurrences again.

Their life histories, particularly those of oppressed people, adivasi, dalit, show the tremendous efforts they had put in to develop themselves ideologically, politically, organizationally and militarily in order to become communist leaders of the movement. Most of them became literate after joining the movement. Many of them had developed as party committee members right from village party committee to district/divisional level committees. We are very proud of the manner they carried on their responsibilities as committee members quite efficiently. Their efforts in this direction will serve as an inspiration for all comrades in the generations to come. They have forever buried the false dictum of this society that

women are always inferior. So we see women doing all kinds of works and taking up all kinds of responsibilities in the party, army and united front activities. They are working and leading in all fronts of the revolution.

Another feature we want to highlight about these martyrs is their bravery and valiance in fighting the enemy. Innumerable incidents of their bravery can be quoted. They have been immortalized in many art and literary forms not to mention the countless songs which describe their bravery and courage. They have become legends in the eyes of the people and sometimes we find even their 'enemies' praising their valiance. Their military skills are not inferior to any of the male comrades and sometimes even surpassed that of their male colleagues. Ordinary peasant, adivasi and petty bourgeois women had become soldiers and military leaders. The military exploits of Rajitha and Lalitha of NT have become legendary and even the armed forces feared them. Karuna and Somvari died during Daula raid, Rambatti during the illustrious Nayagadh raid, Rukmati during the historic Mukaram attack, Anju in the Jhumra Pahad raid, Srilata during the raid on Tirumalagiri PS and many are the working class heroines who died fighting the enemy valiantly in attacks on the armed forces and in the scores of encounters with the armed forces. Porteti Penti (DK) had special forces training and proved her mettle in the last encounter with the police. Vanaja's (AOB) and Radha's (DK) last battles with the police are some of the most valiant fights put up by the guerillas of PLGA. Rathna (AOB) was an action team member. A woman in action teams is still a rarity to find in the PPW. Many sacrificed their lives in these armed confrontations to save their fellow comrades. Health is not on their side and one would be surprised at how much these undernourished, lean, short built women could achieve in the military sphere. The answer is again the same – their determination to fight all patriarchal notions about women and their commitment towards the people as builders of new society.

Here lies the strength of the communist ideology which makes such things possible. It can give rise to this kind of selflessness and their lives in turn guarantee the ultimate triumph of this ideology over selfish class interests and ushers in the communist society. It is their communist spirit and selflessness which turned them into such wonderful human beings. Not for nothing do the masses mobilize in thousands and lakhs to pay homage to these great martyrs.

The one point we want to emphasize many times over to all those who go through this book is the huge number of budding women leaders

that had been done away with by the ruling classes. One's heart bleeds when one thinks of the kind of people's leaders India has lost in this severe repression unleashed by the perpetrators of exploitation, oppression and male domination in the society. There were ideological, political, organizational, military and cultural leaders among them. There were great mass leaders who could lead thousands of people in various struggles. Lingakka (NT), Linge Nano, Pauribai Salaami, Mallam Seethi of DK, Lakshmi (AP) and Badki Devi (JH) were such leaders to name a few. Leaders of the newly emerging people's political power organs were killed (like Mainabai Naitham of DK). Young dynamic militia comrades and militia commanders who were to develop into future military leaders were killed (like Pottami Aithe, Midiyam Aithe of DK). Great singers and artistes who could inspire lakhs of people with their performances had been killed. They were leaders of the cultural movements too. Now, we are talking of the leaders who had a chance to prove themselves. But we have to talk more about the women who had the potential in them to develop into great leaders but had been extinguished too soon. Undoubtedly, many of them could have developed into state level and central level leaders. The revolutionaries are often questioned about the less number of women in the higher level decision making bodies in the party. A perusal through the life histories of these martyrs shows one of the main reasons behind that fact. If only, if only these women had not been killed, one can surely say that they would have developed to those higher levels without any difficulty. Their potential is stuff that leaders are made of. Any person who genuinely feels that revolutionary movement should have considerable number of women leaders should take this fact into consideration and do everything possible to oppose and stop the killings of women revolutionaries.

Some of these martyrs had been arrested and had spent jail terms in the course of their revolutionary lives. They had been tortured when they were arrested and even in jails they had to live in abysmal conditions. But they kept the red flag aloft in jails too and had placed a model before the people about the role of a revolutionary in jail. The important thing to note is that in such difficulties did not make them step back but fought against the system in a different way by facing immense torture including solitary confinement for indefinite period and they immediately joined the revolutionary movement as soon as they were released. In fact, some of them had to try hard to get the contact of the underground party and had

to face more difficulties meanwhile. The ruling classes try to break the spirit of revolutionaries by torturing and putting them in jails but in majority of the cases all this only served to redouble their commitment. We hold such martyrs in great esteem and put their example before the people as models to emulate. Even today, scores of women comrades are languishing in jails but are keeping up their spirits with the inspiration of such martyrs.

The life histories presented here just give a glimpse about their lives. In fact, if we write in detail about every individual comrade, it will become a book. And we genuinely feel it is worthy of writing too. But our limitations are such that in this war it is becoming increasingly difficult to record the number of deaths or to note the details about their lives. It made us extremely sad to see that about some women comrades the information available is so meager. It made our hearts bleed to write so less about somebody who had not hesitated to make the supreme sacrifice for the sake of the oppressed people. We are painfully aware that the task of recording their life histories would become even more difficult in the future as the war intensifies. So we are using this occasion to place an imperative request before all of you to try and bring to light the various inspiring aspects in the lives of these great women in as many ways as possible. Already as part of the revolutionary cultural and literary movements, innumerable songs, write ups, memoirs, poems, stories, articles etc had been written about the martyrs. A novel was written about Com. Jilani Bano in Telugu. Separate books/booklets/folders had been published about some women comrades. Their writings were published too. But even these do not suffice. They show us only the tip of an iceberg. Recording the various emotional, moving and inspiring aspects in their lives cannot be done by any individual and so we would like each person concerned about or associated with the revolutionary and democratic movements in our country to take this up as one of the tasks to be fulfilled as part of their activities. We also request the comrades in the revolutionary movement to be more diligent and meticulous in recording the life histories of martyrs and to do it in time as far as possible. This should be realized as an integral part of the 'war' too – the war to reclaim our memories from those who swear to destroy them.

The reason for the repression becoming more and more severe in the past 15 years is the globalization policies pushed by the government under the guidance of the imperialists. The imperialists, big comprador

bureaucratic capitalist and the feudal landlords want to plunder the vast mineral and natural resources of India especially in the forest areas of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, Kanataka, Northeast, etc. The reactionary ruling classes want to suppress the Party and PLGA which defends the interests of the people and which are organizing the people into struggles against the plunderers. The unjustified 'War on People' was launched in the name of Operation Green Hunt for this purpose since mid-2009. Many people as well as party activists and soldiers of PLGA and highest level party leaders were targeted and killed. They sacrificed lives in this bitter struggle against the imperialist led ruling classes. As more and more women are realizing the truth and joining the struggles, the number of women losing their lives also increases. But this large number not only indicates the level of repression and the scale of the movement but also the fact that women are joining the party and army in large numbers. It shows that oppressed women are increasingly choosing the revolutionary path.

Never in the history of the Indian communist movement have so many women comrades (that too in leading positions in the party, army and UF) been killed by the armed forces. It is necessary to build up a strong civil rights and democratic movement to fight this brutal repression. Highlighting the repression on women should be one of the main tasks of this movement. More than anything the need of the hour is to unite every just struggle of the women under a banner of democratic and revolutionary organizations. We hope this book would serve its role in inspiring the people of our country to take steps towards taking and intensifying such action. Comrades like Anuradha Ghandy, Kurnool Padma and many other comrades had strived to interact with the other democratic and progressive women's movements and individuals in their life time to build such a broad based united women's movement building bridges between the vast rural tracts and the expanding urban populace. It would be a fitting homage to the efforts of such martyrs to build such a unity among the oppressed women of all sections.

The ruling classes are using every opportunity at their disposal to carry on psychological warfare against the revolutionaries. It is one of the main tasks of the revolutionary movement to fight back this foul propaganda in various forms and manners. The life histories of these great martyrs are one of the most powerful weapon in the hands of the party and the

revolutionary people to defeat the psy-war of the ruling classes which always to try to portray the Maoists as 'terrorists' 'cruel' 'selfish' 'killers' 'hoarders' 'oppressors and exploiters of women' etc etc. By giving a glimpse into what goes into the making of a communist, these life histories prove without an iota of doubt that communists represent the most humane values in life and that they have sacrificed their lives to establish those values in the whole society.

The revolutionary movement is also humbly accepting that it has to review the causes for the martyrdom of each invaluable comrade and analyze the shortcomings which led to them. This is a class war and no victory for the oppressed people is possible in this war without sacrifices. In fact, as the People's War intensifies, the brutal onslaught of the exploiting classes would increase further and martyrdoms would also increase due to this. But it is the declared aim of the communist party to achieve the liberation of the people with as less sacrifices as possible. The revolutionary movement vows to overcome the shortcomings, wrong assessments and any other reasons which may have led to martyrdoms which could have been avoided if only more attention has been paid to these reasons. This constitutes one of the important inherent aspects in the homage paid to the martyrs by the revolutionary party. The glorious martyrs are teaching lessons to their revolutionary heirs not only through their lives but also with their deaths. Every revolutionary should humbly learn these lessons in order to advance the People's War further.

The fact that so many women and men are getting killed in the movement is not dampening the spirit of the fighting people in the movement areas. On the contrary, their lives are inspiring more and more women and men to join the revolution. The most popular books among the cadres, soldiers of PLGA and people are the books which contain the life histories of these martyrs. Even these martyrs had been inspired by revolutionaries who had been martyred before them. The cadres studiously study their lives to imbibe their exemplary qualities. As the people's war is advancing, most of the cadres find their close comrades in arms getting martyred in front of their eyes. Many a time they have to carry their dead bodies and weapons to safety and perform their last rites in revolutionary tradition. Death has become a daily fact of life and the cadres and soldiers know that one day it will be their turn.

The occasion which is observed with great solemnity in all the movement areas is the Martyrs' week from July 28 to August 3. July 28 is

the day when Comrade Charu Mazumdar, the great founder leader of Naxalbari rebellion and leader of Indian revolution was martyred in police custody. This week is observed in the memory of the innumerable martyrs of Indian revolution starting from Com. Charu Mazumdar and Com. Kanhai Chatterji, the founding leaders of the party. People build martyrs' columns in their memory, conduct meetings, rallies, sing songs and perform plays and vow to fulfill the dreams of martyrs of the Indian Revolution and the World Socialist Revolution. The maximum number of songs written as part of the cultural movement is about the martyrs. Parents, relatives and friends of the martyrs attend these meetings and pay their homage. Most of them are proud of their darling daughters and sons who have won a place in the hearts of lakhs of people. In the movement areas, martyrdom is something to be inspired from, to be proud of and not something to be feared or to be apprehensive about.

And this is what the ruling classes fear the most. That is why their mercenary armed police and paramilitary goons try to destroy everything that even remotely reminds one of their supreme sacrifices. Martyrs' columns are demolished; July 28 meetings are disrupted, fired upon; people are jailed, maimed and harassed for attending the commemoration meetings; martyrs' families are threatened and so forth. So now July 28 has become not just a day of commemorating martyrs but a day of defiance, a day of battles with the police to preserve their memories. Publishing books like these would also amount to 'treason' in the eyes of the ruling classes.

The Indian revolution is carried out as part of the World Socialist Revolution and the CPI (Maoist) considers itself an inseparable part of it, considers the PLGA as a detachment of the army of the international proletariat and the new democratic people's power or base areas as an integral part and parcel of bases of world proletariat and oppressed people. Countless leaders and soldiers and people have laid down their lives all over the world in all the countries as part of the revolutionary struggles and Maoist movements. Many women have become martyrs as part of the ongoing nationality struggles against the imperialists and reactionary ruling classes. Likewise there have been many sacrifices of women in the revolutionary movements of Peru, Turkey, Phillippines and Nepal. All over the world, many women are sacrificing their lives in anti-imperialist struggles. On this occasion we remember all those martyrs who gave their lives for building a better society for all of us as part of the World

Socialist Revolution.

On this solemn occasion let us bow our heads humbly before the martyrs and once again vow that till our last drop of blood we will continue their work and strive to realize their lofty aims. As the People's War advances the sacrifices also increase. No revolution can advance without such supreme sacrifices. Let us mobilize millions upon millions women, intensify the revolutionary war for area-wise seizure of power, liberate our country and realize the dreams of our beloved martyrs.

Let us vow to prepare ourselves for any kind of sacrifice to fulfill their dream of establishing communism all over the world where there is no exploitation, domination and oppression of the people. The lives of these martyrs would constantly inspire us in fulfilling these aims.

Naxalbari Martyrs

Women were mobilized in the Naxalbari (West Bengal) struggle. They attended village meetings and remained in the van of the demonstrations. Very often entire families joined the movement. Women confronted the police when the male activists went into hiding; they kept contact with the activists, while doing household work and working the fields. Some young activists who learnt to use arms chased away the anti-socials that molested women. There grew up a nucleus of militants.

After the murder of Wangdi, the male activists took shelter in the forests; the women activists tried to organise a meeting on 25 May, 1967 at Prasadjote. The police fired on the demonstration and killed seven women and a child was killed along with her mother. Dhaneshwari Singh, Sanamati Singh, Pulmati Singh, Surabala Barman who were killed in police firing came from the Rajbansi Community. Dhaneshwari Singh was literate and became a leading activist and went to distant villages for campaigning. Naganeshwari Mallick who was born in a Dhamal Community in 1944 married a refugee schoolteacher from East Pakistan. She worked hard as a sharecropper and collected wood from the forests. Nayan was killed along with her child who was tied to her back. Samsai Saibani, a brave tribal girl was one of the leading organizers of the demonstration. These were the first (women) martyrs of the Naxalbari struggle.

Rangametia Martyrs

Martyrdom : 22-12-1969

Comrades Panigrahi, Ramesh Chandra Sahu, Nirmala, Ankamma, Saraswathi and another comrade were surrounded by the police when they were camping in Rangametia Hills in Srikakulam district on December 22 1969 and all of them were shot dead in cold blood.

Comrade Panchadi Nirmala

"Mother Goddesses are worshipped

Mythical heroines remembered

Jhansi Lakshmibai is given tearful tributes

Sarojini Devi gets garlands and praises

Yet, the name of Panchadi Nirmala gives them tremors"

wrote Mahakavi Sri Sri. Such was the legend of Nirmala. The fearless commander who filled the class enemies with fear!

The name of Nirmala at once symbolized the role of women in the revolutionary movement and still remains a name which can mobilize the younger generations into the struggle for Socialism and Communism. It is one name which can really be said to have become a household name since the 70s in Andhra Pradesh.

Comrade Nirmala was born in a poor peasant family in the village of Kavali of Palakonda taluq, Srikakulam district As was the norm in those days she married at an young age. Her husband Comrade Panchadi Krishnamurti worked in the CPI and then in CPI (M). When CPM also

chose to get bogged down in the parliamentary pig sty, revolutionaries came out of the party with the determination to carry on the armed struggle. Krishnamurthy was one of them. Later he became a leader of the Srikakulam movement and guided it. As his wife, she proved to be a companion par excellence. With a little bit of help from him, she got educated and enormously improved her political understanding. She did not stop at that and implemented in practice whatever she learnt. In our society it is still thought that a woman should serve her family and not take part in political activities. It was even more so then.

After their family settled in Boddapadu village, she immediately mingled with the local peasant women and they were inspired by her presence. She used to move around the village to enlighten the common folk not only of class politics, but also of various facets of social life including healthcare. Since Krishnamurthy had the responsibility of coordinating the whole movement, he could not stay for a long time in Boddapadu. Nirmala took it in her stride and dedicated herself to the task of mobilizing the plain area people. The peasant women of the area really got attached to her. Nirmala joined the 'Tegimpu Sangam' (Daring Oraganization) formed by Com. Tamada Ganapathy in Boddapadu village. The young men and women members of this sangam did physical exercises to improve their physique and also learnt how to resist the enemy. Nirmala took such training too.

She played a central role when fighting a local land lord, an established enemy of the people. Under the leadership of the 'Tegimpu Sangam' women fought against the atrocities on them and also against the exploitation of usurers and liquour traders.

When the call for the struggle for the liberation of peasants was given, she immediately joined it, with a baby on her shoulder. One day, when they were approaching their camp on a hill, the baby began to cry. Panchadi Krishnamurti indicated that the noise emenating from the child would help the enemy to locate the whereabouts of the squad. She had to try hard to pacify the baby. Later he explained to her how the Vietnamese women joined in the struggle leaving their children. Niramla, who was apprehensive of being discharged from the squad was highly relieved. She sent her child to her relatives the very next day. The feudal patriarchal society puts the responsibility of child rearing solely on the mother. But Nirmala shattered those role models to fulfill her due role in the transformation of

the society.

Even as her life was inseparably getting entwined with the revolutionary movement, Krishnamurthy was killed by the police in an encounter. Nirmala was completely shaken and enraged on hearing about the martyrdom of Comrade Krishnamurti. She was advised and requested by the party, to be with her children for a while. But her husband's glorious martyrdom gave her a new awareness and inspiration. She could not stay back. Leaving her children, she immediately joined the squad. Within a few days she became the commander of the squad.

Under her leadership many heroic struggles erupted within a few days. Maddi Kamesh was a notorious and cruel landlord of Garudabhadra village in Uddanam area. He occupied the lands of the people illegally and perpetuated atrocities on those who opposed him. Nirmala attacked his house with 150 people. They annihilated him and distributed his property and all agricultural produce among the poor peasants.

Sara Appanna was a big landlord in Banjari Yuvarajapuram in Tekkali Tehsil. He was an usurer who exploited people cruelly. The Sangam members who opposed him were put in jail and their families were harassed. 200 people under the leadership of Nirmala annihilated him and distributed his property among the poor peasants. All loan deeds were burnt. The loan deeds were crucial in exploiting the peasantry. That is why the peasants had expressed their hatred by burning them. Many struggles against the *sahukars* and landlords took place under the leadership of Nirmala.

In Akkupalli village of Uddanam area, the landlord and usurer Bhuchander Rao was annihilated by 200 people under the leadership of Nirmala and his property was distributed. Nirmala wrote on the walls 'Long live revolution' with his blood and once again proved that nobody could stop the juggernaut of people's fury.

A landlord of Bathupuram in Uddanam area exploited people with liquor trade and usury. He used to give very less coolie rates to the labourers working in his fields. He perpetuated sexual atrocities on women and tortured those who questioned him. Four to five hundred people mobilized under the leadership of Nirmala and annihilated him. His lands and property were seized by the people and loan deeds were all burnt.

When private bus owners behaved obscenely with women, Nirmala stopped the buses and made them apologize to the women. Many more actions took place under her. In all these struggles she mobilized the support of the people and ensured their participation. After every action she gave speeches to the people explaining the motive behind it. Due to this people could own the actions done by the sangam. From this we can understand the relationship between the sangam and the people and the way it strived to increase the participation of the people.

It was Nirmala everywhere. Her name inspired many oppressed people to join the squads. Poor peasant women also joined the squads in large numbers. The police gangs could not contain the initiative of her squads. So poor peasant women joined the squads in considerable numbers.

The people almost worshipped her. But the landlords were in shivers. She looked like the incarnation of death for them. Incidents were reported where landlords and their family members shrieked and fell down from their beds at night time dreaming of her. But the peasants were too happy.

The police went mad at the very mention of her name and tried to capture her by hounding her squad. They wanted to kill her at any cost.

On December 22, 1969, the squad had stopped in a village while on their way to a party conference. They were travelling from plain areas to the forest area. In the hills of Rangametia, the police surrounded Comrades Nirmala, Ankamma, Saraswati along with comrades Panigrahi, Ramesh Chandra Sahu, Tamada Chinababu and shot them after seriously torturing them. An informer had informed the police about their whereabouts. After conducting post-mortem on their bodies, the police threw their bodies on the road and showed the world how degenerated they can be.

Comrade Nirmala stayed undaunted when she was tortured by the enemy. Her courage, valour, her initiative and sagacity in the liberation struggle stands an example not only for the women of Andhra, but of India. All the women comrades who join the revolution since then look up to her for inspiration and each one of them considers herself a revolutionary heir of Nirmala. Nirmala is the most common name taken by women comrades who join the revolutionary movement. Many revolutionary couples and sympathizers named their daughters after her. Such is the legend of Com. Panchadi Nirmala. Whether it was in leading the party, army or mass organizations, in ensuring people's participation, in leaving

behind her children, continuing the work of her husband even after his martyrdom with great determination or in facing the enemy torture Nirmala had set the highest standards for all communists to follow and especially for the women comrades. The name of Nirmala would live forever in the hearts of the oppressed and expoited people of India.

Comrade Dunna Ankamma

Comrade Gorakala Ankamma was a woman activist from Rajam of Tekkali taluq, Srikakulam district She was born in the 50s in a poor peasant family. Even at an early age of eighteen, her every word and activity reflected her anger at landlords and moneybags. With her keen observation, she understood about the exploitation of the landlords and the usurers and had joined the 'Tegimpu Sangam' at a young age. She undertook all kinds of rigourous training in the sangam. She understood that she could get real freedom only by fighting for it. She was totally inspired by the clarion call of liberation struggle of the peasants. She joined the armed squad under the leadership of Nirmala.

Garudabhadra was a place where a human beast named Maddi Kamesh was ruling the roost. She became a member of the women squad which specifically went there to organize the people against the said villain. The landlord's henchmen tried to resist the entry of the squad with goondaism. And in repelling them, Ankamma along with Nirmala played a key role. They could teach him the first lesson of his life. She also participated

in the actions on Sara Appanna, on the land lord of Bathupuram and in the struggle against private bus owners. She was part of all the brave actions of the Sangam.

Comrade Ankamma was very conscious in exhibiting and directing her initiative and anger against class enemy. She was very active in the liberation struggle. Even when they were hounded by the police she never wavered or looked back. In the Rangametia incident Ankamma was killed by the police on December 22, 1969. Her life and death created a niche for her in the revolutionary struggle. Ankamma opened a fresh ground in revolutionary struggle. She was an exemplary comrade.

Comrade Telakala Saraswati

Comrade Telakala Saraswati was a young woman born in a poor peasant family. Her parents died when she was young. She had an elder sister. At first her sister was attracted towards the activities of the 'Tegimpu Sangam' and joined it. With her inspiration Saraswathi also joined it. Both of them worked together. As a result they had to face the threats of the land lord. Due to this, she and her sister started to live in the office premises of the organisation. After some days her sister left the movement and went back home. But Saraswathi stood firm. She realized that she has to work more firmly in the Sangam if she has to face the land lords who threaten her. Within a few days she joined the armed squad. She was active in the actions on Maddi Kamesh, Sara Appanna, Bathupuram land lord and in seizing their properties. She was also part of the struggle against the private bus owners. In this manner she was active in all the struggles led by Nirmala.

She never looked back even when their squads were hounded by the police. She was caught along with Comrade Nirmala and others on December 22, 1969. She stood like a firm rock even when the enemy tortured her. She was a valorous lady, who defied every form of torture and died a proud death. She was hardly 19 years old at the time of her death. Her exemplary life etched a place for her in the hearts of woman activists and poor peasants along with Comrade Nirmala. Her life is a model to emulate.

Some more people's heroines who laid down their lives in the Srikakulam movement

The name 'encounter' assumed notoreity during the Srikakulam movement. Many revolutionaries, sympathizers and ordinary people were killed in cold blood by the police and then they released the story that they were killed in an 'encounter' with the police. It has become such a common refrain of the police and now the verb 'encountered' had become a synonym for brutal killing by the police. Still the Andhra Pradesh police follow this shameless, heinous way of eliminating revolutionaries. The women mentioned below were murdered by the police in these so called 'encounters'.

Com. Kadraka Purna: The police caught and killed Purna at Joradiguda on June 5, 1969 at 2.30 a.m.

Com. Savara Sukku: Sukku was caught by the police in Antikonda village of Palakonda Taluq on August 5, 1969 with some more comrades and was killed in a forest.

Com. Arika Jayamma: Jayamma was caught by the police with three more comrades on December 11, 1969 near Bodamanuguda and was killed in the Chaparayaguda hills.

Com. Biddika Chandramma: On December 18, 1969 Chandramma was caught when she was going to the hills with her six month old baby in the hills of Kakili and both the mother and child were killed cruelly with bayonets.

Com. Biddika Selja: Selja was caught by the police on December 18, 1969 in Chintalakoridi hills and shot dead.

Com. Biddika Selaka: Selka was caught by the police on December 18, 1969 in Chintalakoridi hills and shot dead.

Com. Korangi Sundari: Sundari was caught near Gadidasai of Palakonda Taluq on December 21, 1969, tortured and shot dead.

Comrade Payasam Lakshmi Devi

Martyrdom : December 1969

Comrade Payasam Lakshmi Devi was from Payasam Rangareddipalle of Kurnool District. From 1955 onwards she was living in Chandan – Tadipatri taluq of Anantapuram district. She was an agriculture labourer. She was an activist of the CPI. She readily fulfilled all tasks given by the party . In all the struggles between peasants and Landlords she was present on the forefront with 'chilli powder mixed with water'. She lived a labourer's life. She was affectionate like a mother to party workers. She was enrolled into party and she was active in the peasant's organisation; she was as important and active in the organisation as Comrade Ramappa.

In 1964 when the split came in CPI, Comrades Ramappa, Lakshmi Devi and in fact the whole committee of the village Chandana joined CPI (M). In the wake of Naxlalbari Spring Thunder the revolutionaries throughout India opted the path of Naxalbari, and were getting organised every where. At that juncture Lakshmi Devi joined the revolutionaries under the leadership of B.C.Ramappa.

On the call of the party, Comrade Lakshmi Devi went underground in October 1969. But the same year in December, her health deteriorated due to anaemia and she died.

Lakshmi Devi's life is a proud chapter in the history of revolutionary movement of India. She was absolutely poor; her faith in party and the people was unparalleled. Her total dedication and revolutionary zeal are an everlasting inspiration to all women comrades.

Comrade Bommareddy Snehalatha

Martyrdom : 1977

Comrade Snehalata was from the village Telaprolu of Krishna district, AP. She was born in a rich peasant family. Her educational qualifications were M.A., B.Ed, B.L. She later joined as a teacher in a boy's convent (Eluru). But she was unhappy with the condition of the women who were bound to the kitchen as a child producing machines, and slaves to the patriarchal bigotry. These roles imposed on woman agitated her. She wrote many short stories and short poems about this shameless and inhuman attitude of the society and state. All her stories revolve round the discrimination faced by women and social violence of all sorts on them. At that time of her life, Marxism was introduced to her. She realized that women's emancipation would be really possible through social revolution. She plunged into revolutionary activity. When she was 25, she joined a peasant guerilla squad in 1973. She was simultaneously a teacher to her squad members. They used to respect her and love her. She was involved in armed actions of her squad on landlords and state. In Manukota area of Warangal district where her squad worked. She mingled with the people. She used to study the life at large of the ordinary people and guide them. She was educated them, ate with them whatever they gave her, resting at all and sundry places like village *chavadis* (meeting places), rice fields, hill tracts etc., sometimes missing the meals too. She withstood the hard life of a guerilla.

One day, the squad was taking shelter in a jowar field, in Manukota of Warangal district Suddenly 40-50 police surrounded the area. The commander of the squad gave orders to the effect that everybody of the squad should escape leaving 2 members to join him in stalling the police. A police havaldar and two other constables fell due to firing of the guerillas. The police started firing from all sides indiscriminately. The commander

was shooting at police continuously, so that the remaining members of the squad may escape. And suddenly one bullet from the enemy pierced through the thigh of Snehalata. Meanwhile the magazines in the rifles of the comrades became empty. Police caught them and an atrocious torture session began. They were tied to the trees. They were tortured continuously for two hours. But in spite of all their brutal and inhuman tortures, the police could not extract even an iota of information from the comrades. Unarmed, tied to the tree, they were killed by the police. The leaves of the jowar plants were wet with their blood and looked like red flags. Snehalata, fighting with the enemy, became immortal through her death. She shines like a red star on the sky inspiring the women.

This took place during the emergency period in 1975. Along with Nirmala, Snehalatha became another legendary figure of the Naxalbari generation. Many named their daughters as Snehalatha. She inspired many generations of women students to become revolutionaries as she herself was a briliiant scholar but left her life for the people. Her intelligent eyes and the serene but determined expression in them is an image which caught the imagination of scores of activists who jumped into the movement, even amidst severe repression during emergency.

Comrade Kunchapu Nagalakshmi

Martyrdom : 31-01-1979

It was the village Panditapuram, Illendu taluq, Khammam district in AP. The peasants of the village were preparing to wage struggle against the feudal exploitation and atrocities of landlords. They went on strike and wage rates increased. In that village there was a land of 100 acres-of *'sikham'* land i.e. the bed of the tank. For so many years, it was occupied by the village land lords. They were reaping the fruits. The peasant organization and radical youth organization decided that the land should belong to peasants and agriculture labourers. The landlords without cognizing the resolve of the organizations had grown 'black grams' on the land. Following the village Sangam resolution all the poor peasantry seized the entire crop. The landlords brought the police on 31-1-79 and sent them to attack the peasants. The police having been sufficiently fed by the land lords searched all the houses and collected the entire crop. They pounced on the peasants and agricultural laborers, beating them indiscriminately. They terrorized the people. The village peasant organization and radical youth league organized a procession condemning the police action. They were marching peacefully. Suddenly the police came from behind and started firing without any warning. In those firings Comrades Kunchapu Nagalakshmi and Vatti Lalayya were killed; four people were seriously injured.

But the people were not discouraged by this event. Two things became clear once more: 1. the state government of Chennareddy day in and day out was declaring that the government was bound to the cause of weaker sections of the people, but was actually supporting the landlords; 2. the sacrifices made by comrade Nagalakshmi and comrade Lalayya were not in vain; immediately, North Telangana districts erupted like volcanoes of revolutionary struggles.

Boorugupakala Martyr
Comrade Lotha Rajeswari

Martyrdom : 03-09-1985

The women in this country are not simply slaves, kitchen bound animals, child bearing machines, bedroom nymphs, but are Jhansis, Ailammas, Nirmalas and Snehalathas. This has been proved time and again in the history of revolutionary movement. The ever extending revolutionary movement also assertively proved that women are concurrently working on par with their male counterparts in the struggle. Comrade Lotha Rajeswari (Jyothi) is one of them. On the evening of the 3rd September 1985 the Korukonda squad was walking through the forest. By the time they got tired, they were reaching the village of Boorugupakala. On seeing the squad Adivasis became excited and happy. They gathered around the squad.The revolutionary guerilla squad forgot their fatigue because of the love and affection shown to them after formalities. A meeting was arranged in the village for solving a problem of the people. At the end of the meeting, the squad performed cultural items. The meeting and the performances lasted till midnight. With a new enthusiasm in their hearts, the Adivasis returned to their huts. The squad also rested in a hut. The moon was shining with white brilliance on the huts of Boorugupakala. The Adivasis were in deep slumber. And the squad was equally restful. In the morning wee hours, on the information of a traitor called Gabbilam Sanjiv Rao, 40 to 50 policemen came to the village, surrounded the huts and caught five of the comrades. The remaining four comrades escaped. All the five arrested comrades were bound to the trees and shot at point blank range. Comrade Rajeswari was one of the five martyrs.

Rajeswari was 17 just years old when she died. She was from Galikonda village of Chintapalli taluq, Visakha district. She belonged to a Bagatha family, which is one of the backward Adivasi tribes. At that time the atrocities on the adivasis were going on a large scale. As she grew up, the struggles of people under the leadership of People's War party had started in that area. These struggles increased her revolutionary consciousness. She enhanced her understanding about the exploitation of adivasis and about patriarchy. She realized that armed struggle against the exploiters is the only way to end their troubles.

Her village was under CPI influence by then. Her father left CPI and joined People's War. Rajeswari also hated the revisionist politics and so chose to join the PW party.

On 4th January 1985 she took up the weapon for revolution and became a member of Korukonda squad. She was one of the first few women who got recruited into the East Division squads. It was not a small decision for a woman of a backward tribe with patriarchal norms to work in an all-men squad. It was the confidence the squad comrades could give her which helped her make such a firm decision. When her parents said, "You cannot withstand the difficulties that guerillas are facing in this tender age. You can join the squad later," she replied "When the brothers and sisters who have come from the plains are taking pains for our betterment, how is it difficult for us, born and brought up in the forest?" With that kind of the determination, Jyothi came forward to play her role. Then onwards she was known to the people as Jyothi.

Among the adivasis there, women were not allowed to go for hunting. Women were not even allowed to touch the bow used for hunting. From such a background Jyothi came forward to wield the gun.

She surprised her squad colleagues by learning to read within a short span of time. Adivasi women, dragged down by backwardness, superstitions and conventions were educated by Jyothi through her songs. She effectively conveyed the revolutionary politics to the Adivasis in their native language and became very dear to the people. As a member of the squad Jyothi organised people into many local struggles. She had wonderful initiative. The people loved her. Women were especially inspired by the fact that one of their girls could develop politically and teach them so many things. They gained the confidence that they too can work like her by joining the squads. After some time, she married the leader of the squad in the presence of the Adivasis. This was also a big step for an adivasi girl as there were many kinds of restrictions on women choosing their partners in that society. Jyothi took a revolutionary step by choosing to marry a non-adivasi comrade.

In the Manyam area where Jyoti worked, Alluri Sitarama Raju and adivasis under his leadership fought against the British. At that time, an Adivasi woman named Ratthi was caught, tortured and killed in Eddumamidi village. The killers were the British. The present day Indian rulers also heinously killed Comrade Rajeswari. NTR had bellowed

dialogues that naxalites were the real patriots and came to power but immediately he began killing revolutionaries in such fake encounters. Between then and now only the rulers changed. But exploitation continues. The problems of the people are addressed with guns then and now also. Jyothi who worked for women's liberation was killed in cold blood with four other comrades. This was the first 'encounter' in Manyam where there was loss of lives of guerillas. Jyothi became the first woman martyr, that too an adivasi woman martyr of Manyam. Though Jyothi is no more, her name inspired many women to join the revolution from the forests and the plains too. Comrade Jyothi has written with her blood that liberation of women is possible only through New Democratic Revolution. Let us carry this message to all women.

Comrade Maddela Swarnalatha

Martyrdom : 26-04-1987

Comrade Maddela Swarnalata was born in a middle class dalit family in village Duppalli of Modukuru taluq, Nalgonda district. She was the only daughter of her parents. She was attracted by activities of Radical Students Union (RSU) when she was studying in Intermediate in Suryapet in 1981. The martyr Comrade Seshanna of Nalgonda district was her inspiration and political guru. It was a time when the goondaism of ABVP knew no bounds and women students were particularly victims. Some even left their studies and went back home unable to bear their hooliganism. RSU activities extended all over the state in that period and it had stood up against the ABVP in support of the poor, dalit and women students. In Suryapet town, Com. Seshanna led the students against the ABVP goons. Com. Swarna also joined this struggle and stood in support of the students against ragging and sexual harassment of women students. The ABVP goons could not tolerate this rebellion of the students against them and so they killed its leader Seshanna. This was a big blow for Swarna but she did not lose heart and vowed to carry forward the lofty aims of her mentor. She became more active in the revolutionary student movement.

Later Swarna joined polytechnic college in Hyderabad and was in the forefront in all activities of RSU. Swarna stayed in the women's social welfare hostel, in Musheerabad. There she organized the women students on many issues. In the city Swarna was always in the forefront whenever there were meetings, processions etc of RSU, RYL and Virasam (RWA). There was not even one meeting where Swarna had not participated. Normally in processions her slogan shouting was so powerful that people remember it to this day. In 1984 when Swarna went to meet a medical student who was earlier arrested and put in jail, she was also taken away

by the police and was tortured to reveal the secrets of the party. But she did not utter a word. She was active in all the struggles taken up by RSU in Hyderabad and thus became an important figure in the student movement of the twin cities.

C.I.D.s used to continuously follow her. Their aim was to locate important comrades by following her. But Swarna could easily hoodwink them always. She used to confuse the police and reach the right place. Swarna participated actively in the 'go to villages' campaigns and led the teams of students. She used to sing songs without the aid of mike and could reach large audience. She became a whole timer to utilize all her abilities to build up the student's organization. Many a time, when she was performing duties accorded by the party, she faced police raids.

During the All India Revolutionary Students Federation's (AIRSF) first conference held in Hyderabad in 1985, government denied permission for taking out a procession. 300 woman delegates held a dharna in front of NTR's house demanding permission and Swarna led it. Police severely lathi-charged the women and many were seriously injured. But the militant women did not step back. So the women delegates were arrested but they continued their dharna inside the police station too. At last the government had to bow before the strength of the women students and grant permission for the procession and finally released them too.

After this incident, repression increased on Swarna and she had to work as an underground activist. She continued organizing students secretly and led them in struggles. During the serious repression period, she moved around in industrial townships and organized workers. She became a close friend to working class families.

In December, 1985, she was transferred to East Division. She realized the need for students to participate in the agrarian revolution and did not hesitate to go and work in the backward adivasi area. She was the first woman from the urban areas to join the squads in the Manyam area. She was inspired by comrade Jyoti who was martyred just a few days earlier there and changed her name as Jyoti.

Comrade Lacchakka

Martyrdom : 28-05-1986

It is no exaggeration to say that there is not even a single village in Karimnagar district of AP which was not raided by police since 1985. This was the result after NTR Government brought CRPF and estabished hundreds of police camps to suppress the peasant struggles in Telangana districts. On the night of 28th May 1986 police reached Vallempalli of Metpalli Taluq and raided the house of Comrade Gangaram, the leader of the sangam. Later the police began shooting indiscriminately and Gangaram's sister Lachakkka aged 13 became a victim of the firings. This brutal murder is part of the war against the people, jointly perpetrated by the police and feudal goons. Let us offer Red salutes to the Lacchakka, who lost her life at a tender age in the class war.

Comrade Chinnakka

Martyrdom : 04-03-1989

Born in a poor peasant family in village Dulapuram of Venkatapuram Tehsil in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh, Chinnakka was the first woman from the tribal community Koya (Dorla tribe) to join the guerrilla squad. In spite of labouring day and night in the fields, there was not enough to eat. So she worked along with her husband as a daily wage labourer. The non-tribal King residing in Wajed ruined the farmers of that region. He took possession of all the land of the tribals in the name of repayment of debt illegally and the helpless farmers had to become labourers under the same exploiter to satiate their hunger. Seeing all this, the patience of Chinnakka reached its limit.

Influenced with the struggles waged by the squad of People's War Party in that area, Chinnakka became a member of the women's organization in the village. With the demand to raise the wages for the work of sowing, she mobilized all the women and led the struggle against the landlords of Wajed. She secretly provided food and water to the squads so that the landlords would not get any clue about the whereabouts of the squad. Influenced by revolutionary politics of the guerrillas, she joined the squad and chose to join her husband who had already devoted himself to the revolution. According to the needs of the party, she was transferred to the Madded squad and left a deep impression in the hearts of the people of Bastar. Chinnakka contributed in mobilizing women in the struggles to put a stop to the plunder by the foresters and moneylenders and also to raise the wages for plucking tendu leaves. Chinnakka was expert in imbuing the women with revolutionary politics in their mother tongue through songs and dances. Due to illness, she went back home and began looking after her children. The police arrested and sent her to jail. After getting released on conditional bail from Venkatapuram sub-jail,

she joined the squad and took oath not to leave the party till her last breath. She once again became the member of Madded squad.

The sarpanch of Sankanpalli village Dubba Kannayya was a leader of the Congress Party and he used to exploit the farmers with feudal traditions. The people of this area and the guerrilla squad gave warning to this enemy of the people. Then he started taking shelter in the police camp. Chinnakka participated in the annihilation of this class enemy and personally chopped off his head. People addressed Chinnakka as Rajakka. She used to compete with the male comrades to gain efficiency in military matters. At the age of 28, she trained hard with the aim of becoming a sniper. When all the comrades in the squad got completely tired while walking continuously in the forests and climbing the mountains, she used to sacrifice her rest and prepared tea for all of them within minutes. She was always ahead in the routine works in the squad. Rajakka contributed in mobilizing the farmers in the struggle for raising the wages of labourers (for sowing) in the neighbouring villages of Madded. Along with the people she participated in seizing the grain from the godowns of landlords who had unleashed terror with the help of police. The land lords tried to sow a seed of discord in the struggle of people. But, the conspiracies of the landlords were rendered useless. According to the needs of the Party, she went to work in the National Park squad and very soon developed close relations with the people. Rajakka went propagating from village to village mobilizing people on the demand of closure of the Indravathi Abhayaranya, which was set up for creating a sanctuary for bisons and lions by chasing away the people of Madiya Community who would be deprived of even the basic means of sustenance and would be rendered homeless. Rajakka was always ahead in taking up responsibilities. She became the rear guard of the squad.

On March 4th, 1989, the squad was in the jungle nearby Mukavelli and Rajakka was on sentry duty. Then the SAF soldiers attacked them from both the sides. Without showing any hesitation in defending the squad, Rajakka opened fire at the policemen attacking from the flank and foiled their attempts to attack the squad. But she got injured in the attack made from the flank and the policemen killed her by stabbing with bayonet. A Hawaldar was also injured in this attack. The news of martyrdom of Rajakka spread immense grief in the whole of Bastar. At many places people vented their fury by destroying government property. Rajakka left home and children, joined the revolution and proved that woman were not weak or inferior to males in fighting. The great martyr will always live in the hearts of the people.

Comrade Yelam Nagakka

Martyrdom : 22-03-1989

Comrade Nagakka was from Dorla tribe Adivasi family of Madded area in Bastar district (then in MP). As long as exploitation and suppression are there, the lives of Adivasis would not change. That was the firm belief of Nagakka. So she got attached to the revolutionary movement so as to end exploitation permanently. On 8th January 1989 she joined in Madded dalam. After joining the squad, she learnt revolutionary politics and played an active role in the activities of the squad. But within a short time after she joined the squad she became seriously ill. Her comrades tried to save her, but in vain. On March 22nd 1989 she died.

It is not very important how long one lives but it is very important how one lives. Nagakka who traveled in the path of the struggle for the sake of people till her last breath, and who died for them is immortal in the eyes of people. Her sacrifice will not forgotten.

Comrade Narsakka

Martyrdom : 11-06-1990

Comrade Narsakka belongs to Madanapalli of Nizamabad district, AP. Inspired by the peasant struggles around Nizamabad, Narsakka actively took part in those activities. Narsakka participated in many struggles in 1990. She was active in dharna against power cut in Nizamabad district. In May 1990 she participated in Rythu Coolie Sangam conference at Warangal and worked hard there as a volunteer. She conducted a campaign collecting cyclone relief fund in many villages. This cyclone had affected thousands of people and the party had taken a big campaign to give out relief to them.

As Narsakka was with the people and actively doing sangam work the police hatched a conspiracy to finish her off. On 11th June 1990 before dawn, about hundred armed police entered the village. In the presence of all the people they brought out the sleeping Narsakka and another activist of a mass organization comrade Prasad from the house and beat them severely near the Gandhi statue in the village. Then the police took them to the same house. They threatened all the people to go away and shot both of them dead inside the house. They killed comrade Swami, brother of Narsakka who was sleeping in another house too.

Comrade Narsakka was inspired by the martyrs of the movement like Nirmala, Swarna, Jyoti, Rajakka and joined revolutionary activities. In the path of these great sisters, Narsakka spilled her blood in the same cause and her name too became eternal alongside theirs.

Comrade Mailapalli Seethamma

Martyrdom : May 1990

The struggle which was revived in Uddanam after learning lessons from the glorious Srikakulam struggle of the past, reached Ranasthalam after unifying with the coastal fishermen. This struggle soon spread throughout the Srikakulam district and created tremors in the hearts of landlords. The people are trampled under the exploitation of forest department which does not allow them even to gather fire wood. The prawn they catch is not theirs; they can't eat them, and are exported. Their boats and nets are not their own. They are given on hire by sahukars. They can not pick fruit from the cashew orchards which are adjacent to their houses. They belong to the forest department. They have to walk miles together for drinking water. They get food only when they get good catch and remain hungry when they don't get. Forced to migrate to Calcutta, Paradeep, Andaman etc. they are ditched even by the migratory life and are driven away to the coast.

Gorle Sri Ramulu Naidu was the most notorious among the cruel landlords of Srikakulam. Money and political power acquired through his post as zilla parishad chairman and minister added to his cruelty and he turned a monster towards poor people.

The goondas of Gorle Sri Ramulu Naidu used to extort lakhs of rupees after the harvest of prawns by the fishermen. With feudal arrogance, he made his goons beat up any one who wore slippers while walking or rode a bicycle in front of his bungalow. Every adolescent girl and every new bride coming to the village after the marriage was molested by him. Who ever opposed him turned into a corpse and floated near the sea shore. The fishermen in the area of Ranasthalam, who for ages experienced exploitation and atrocities at his hands, ultimately formed a fishermen union. Union of fishermen was formed in Jeerupalem also. Comrade Mylapalli Seethamma also participated actively in those union activities. The village people unified and conducted many struggles. With those struggles they stopped paying the commission for prawn collection, which he used to collect. They could stop his social atrocities. They planned to drag his brother, who also got rich at the cost of the labourers of the village, to a people's court. He came to know about this, he attacked Jeerupalem with his goondas, burning their houses and destroying them.

Mylapalli Seethamma, who was pregnant could not run and so the goondas caught hold of her, pushed her into flames, and stood guard there to prevent her from coming out. Thus she was burnt alive by these inhuman beasts in a gruesome manner.

Comrade Seethamma became a martyr participating in the anti-feudal struggle being waged as part of the agrarian revolution under the leadership of People's War. The real tribute to many women like Seethamma is to overthrow the feudal and big bourgeoisie system and establish the society of peasants and workers.

Comrade Satyavathi

Martyrdom : 1990

Com. Satyavathi was born in the Ullipogula Cheedipalem village in the Ellavaram area of Addatheegala mandal of East Godavari district. This was part of the East division (presently in AOB). She belonged to the Kammari tribe among the adivasis.

Cheedipalem was associated with the revolutionary movement from 1987. The Kammari adivasis played an active role in the class struggles and in resisting the police in East Godavari district. They did not have permanent lands. They eked out a living by cutting wood and burning it to produce coal. They also sold liquor. They had to face the atrocities of forest officers and the excise officials due to these trades. But there were many incidents where the adivasis had beaten both these kinds of government officials. That was why this village created terror among the forest officers and excise officials.

The people of this militant village joined the sangams under the leadership of the party and fought against the exploiters. Satyavathi became a member of Adivasi Viplava Mahila Sangam (AVMS). In 1990, many struggles were conducted in that village. Police raided the village many times in order to catch the sangam leaders. The villagers had fought the police and had stopped them from arresting their leaders. In one such incident a large posse of police descended on the village to catch the sangam leader. The whole village resisted the police. But taking advantage of their numbers the police began searching every house. At that time Satyavathi asked the sangam leader to take shelter in her house. When the police came and questioned, she replied that he was her husband. The police believed her and left. Thus she protected the leader cleverly.

But later the police came to know that she had lied to them and so they came back and attacked the village. Satyavathi was pregnant at that time but the inhuman police tortured her brutally and she died. She had put up a model before us on how to protect the sangam leaders. Only by building a strong revolutionary movement we can pay real homage to comrades like her.

Comrade Vijaya

Martyrdom : .....

Vijaya was born in a poor family in Repaka village of Regonda mandal in Warangal district. She was still a baby when she lost both her parents and was brought up by her grand parents. They doted on this child. Vijaya got married to a young man from her village. She became aware of the patriarchal oppression and exploitation of women in a feudal society at a young age and was trying for a way out of them.

By 1989, Vijaya got inspired by the anti-feudal struggles in her area raging under the leadership of People's War and got hold of the party contact. She joined the village revolutionary women's organization and worked in an exemplary manner. She stood in the forefront in Warangal district in the anti-arrack struggle which erupted all over Andhra Pradesh in 1990. She explained to the people the evils of drinking and inspired women to join the movement. She made them fight against this social evil and against the government policies giving fillip to it.

Even while she was working actively in the *Sangam*, her husband married another woman. Though she worked actively her class consciousness had not developed still and she became very dull and could not get over this fact. She consumed poison and committed suicide. It is really sad that a budding woman activist should have committed such an act in spite of the support system she could get in the Sangam. In a way, her death had increased the responsibility of the women's organization and made them realize the need to educate women in this aspect. More needs to be done to give confidence to women in such situations and teach them to live with individuality. Let us realize this as a lesson to be learnt from such unnatural deaths.

Comrade Jangu Bai

Martyrdom : 1991

20 April. The year was 1981. The place was Indravelli in Adilabad district It was a bloody instance in the history of the revolution in India. It was the day when the adivasis fighting for their democratic rights threw a challenge to the government which trampled their right to assemble. It is the day when they confronted the brutal armed forces of the government with their conventional weapons.

By 1978-81 the red flag started flying over the forests of Adilabad. The adivasi women came into its fold and began propagating revolutionary politics by forming campaign batches in 1980-81. Naxalites mobilized women and men in the land struggles. As part of those struggles, adivasis marched to Indravelli to hold a meeting. The government refused to give permission in the last minute and people defied the police. The police fired indiscriminately on the adivasis and started a mass massacre. 13 adivasis died in the police firing. Many more were wounded. In the melee, an adivasi woman broke the head of a constable with a stick. Comrade Jangu Bai was one among the wounded. Her leg broke and that never healed. Suffering from that wound for many years, she died in 1991. she belonged to the Pittabonguram village of Indravelli mandal of Adilabad district

Many sisters who have drawn inspiration from the struggle of Indravelli have taken up rifles and taking forward the struggle of adivasis like Com. Jangu Bai.

Comrade Balamma

Martyrdom : 7-9-1991

It has now become common for people to die in the hands of the state not only for participation in movements but also because they are living in the movement areas. 13 year old Balamma was killed by the state for this reason.

Balamma was studying in 6th standard in 1991 in Mohanapuram hostel in Addatheegela mandal of East Godavari district. A non-adivasi land lord had occupied all the lands of the adivasis in Mohanapuram. So a struggle was taken up under the leadership of the sangam. When people occupied the lands which rightfully belonged to them, the police killed a party member named Krishna in a fake encounter.

The squad went to Mohanapuram to know the facts about the incident. Some students met the squad and began discussing about their problems. The police fired on them without even considering the fact that children were there. Balamma died in that firing. Another student and a squad member Narayana also died in that firing. Many students and squad members were injured.

The people's fury erupted against the cruel police who had killed and injured even small children. They burnt down 30 buses in the Eleswaram depot by attacking it. The Divisional Committee gave a call for bandh on October 25. Two police died in an ambush by the guerillas near Gyrampet in Nagulakonda area. The people rose up all over the division and conducted 30 protest actions.

Let us hail the martyrdom of Balamma and work for a society where such innocent children can live and develop fully and freely.

Pagideru Martyr
Comrade Manjula

Martyrdom : 06-01-1992

On 6-1-1992, 13 comrades belonging to the CPI (ML) People's War were arrested while travelling in a van in Pagideru in Khammam district and were murdered in cold blood. They were on their way to a guerilla zone. It was the Congress (I) regime of Janardhan Reddy that committed this heinous act. Manjula was the lone woman comrade among these martyrs.

The Date: 6-1-1992. A private van carrying 13 comrades was stopped by the police. All the 13 were taken to the forests of Pagideru. They were forced to wear olive green uniforms. Then they were shot point blank one after the other. The police shamelessly announced that 13 guerilla squad members were killed in an 'encounter' with them. And they concocted the news as usual, that they were killed when they were trying to hatch a plan to blow up a B.S.F. van. In fact they were all peasant guerillas trying to cross from Khammam district into Dandakaranya to work in the squads there, as decided by the party. Later they killed the van driver, the potential witness and put his dead body in the upturned van on a road and announced that he died in a road accident.

Among the martyrs, there is one woman comrade. She was comrade Manjula, a dalit girl of 20 years. She was born in Raghavapuram of Aleru mandal in Nalgonda district She did household chores and worked in the fields too. She faced all the difficulties that are generally encountered by all rural women of India. Even though work is equal, the labour of women is priced less, and her specially "unpaid" labour at domestic work added to the regular labour. Women are accorded lesser status and she faced all these discriminiations. She married Com.Pochanna in 1989. She got all the necessary political help from Pochanna to develop as a revolutionary. Through him she learned about the exploitation by landlords not only of poor people but also of women and also understood that the root cause of this was the rule of those landlord classes. She was inspired by the lives of the martyrs like Nirmala. Swarna and Jyoti etc. She not only understood the party politics but also was prepared to work for them. Her ideology was finally moulded with that of her companion Pochanna. She joined in the guerilla squad working in the vicinities of Station Ghanpur

(of Warangal district). As a member of the guerilla squad, she imbibed the life style of the common people there. She was not educated when she joined the party. But she had developed enough to read party literature. She tried to explain the current politics in her own style and understanding. And she tried to resolve all the issues that normally arose in the squad routine, by bringing them to the notice of the leadership. She was alert and strict in following the party discipline. She never became any kind of embarrassment or problematic to her colleagues.

She reddened the path of martyrs by laying down her life in the cause of New Democratic Revolution.

Comrade Mortad Narsakka

Martyrdom : 27-01-1992

Comrade Mortad Narsakka (19) was born of a poor dalit agriculture working class family in the village of Ailapuram (Korutla mandal of Karimnagar district). Her father was a physically challenged man. She lived with her mother and an younger and elder brother.

Her elder brother Com. Narsanna (Mallesh) was 'encountered' in May 1987 in one of the most gruesome manners. The CI Jaganmohan Reddy stopped the bus going to Yusufnagar and his police caught Mallesh travelling in that bus. He was asked to run on that road and then they fired on him. He fell down injured. The police then tortured him on the road by beating him with butts and killed him in front of all people. Then his body was thrown in a sugarcane field and they concocted the 'encounter' story. One can only imagine what little Narsakka went through when she heard about this brutal murder of her beloved brother. The martyr's sacrifice and vengeance against the police inspired her to become an activist for the cause of revolution. She expressed her aspiration to join the party to her cousin and he took her to the Beedi workers' union office in Metpalli, affiliated to the CPI ML) Ramachandran group. She worked in the union activities for about eight months. When she went on campaigns with this union to villages including Ailapur, people questioned her why she had joined this party when her brother was a People's War activist. Only then did she realize that she was working for a different party. She left that work and came back to the village and began trying for PW contact. Finally her efforts gave results and she came into contact with the squad.

Due to her initiative and determination she was elected as the ECM of the village RYL. She became very active in the local RYL The people mobilized by the party attacked the tamarind grove of the local land lord, Rajanarsinga Rao and seized the tamarind from about 500 trees. Later they went on to collect the mangoes from the same man's grove. The campaign against the mid term parliament polls was so successful that only 91 votes were polled out of 6000 votes. The campaign consisted of street meetings, processions and talking with individual contacts. The election was basically boycotted. Narasakka was in the forefront of all these party activities. Land lord Rajanarsinga Rao's "gadi" (fort) was filled with grain worth lakhs of rupees and with various articles of the people

grabbed through the years. Under the leadership of the Sangam, approximately four thousand people occupied the 'Gadi' and took away their things. This continued uninterrupted for two days. She played a crucial role in this. This programme of occupation provoked lot of anger among the land lords. The police raided the village, arrested 100 people of who half were women and imposed TADA act on them. In that repressive period, Narsakka escaped arrest and mingled with people giving them the needed solace and courage. She was like a fish in the water and so they could not arrest her. She became the secretary of women's organization not only of her village but also of a few villages around.

28th July was Martyr's Day. Party gave a call to celebrate it every where. In her own village, in spite of severe repression, comrade Narsakka celebrated the Martyr's Day secretely and inspired the people. Her spirit in conducting this meeting is praiseworthy.

When the squad held a meeting to expose the informers, Narsakka spoke boldly in front of hundreds of people and put the informers to shame. Seeing all this, the fear stricken police arrested comrade Narsakka on 27th January 1992 at 10 p.m. on being tipped off by a traitor. The unarmed Narsakka was taken to a nearby village Chittapur. She was tortured brutally in a lonely place and killed brutally. As usually the "encounter" was announced in the newspapers. At a tender age of 20 years, this young comrade ridiculed the system and the police in particular, by actively participating in various activities without getting caught for so many days. She was fearless. She was ever with the people. She faced all tortures valiantly. And with her death she once again emphasized that tortures and bullets could not stop the ideals. Let us offer red salutes to that Red star in the sky.

Comrade Borlam Swarupa

Martyrdom : 06-02-1992

Comrade Swaroopa (Jyoti) became a leader of a guerilla squad overcoming all kinds of hindrances in this patriarchal society. In 1991, there were not many women commanders in the party and she was the first woman commander in North Telangana region. Naturally she had to vigorously train herself in both theory and practice to achieve this feat. More than that, her initiative was highly admirable. She has given inspiration to many budding woman comrades. In fact she had become a role model- "I should one day become a Jyotakka" was the aspiration in the hearts of many women comrades who joined the party then.

Comrade Swaroopa was born in a middle class family of Nallabelli (Darpelli Mandal, Nizamabad Dictrict). She was the only daughter of a RMP doctor. She was educated in Sirnapalli High school. The peasant struggles around that area, caught the imagination of this S.S.C. student. Her curiosity and enthusiasm made her a member of Radical Students Union. She actively participated in all the struggles concerning the student community. At a very early age her understanding of problems concerning the peasants and women was expanding. She arrived at the firm conviction that the liberation of peasants and women could ultimately result from the armed struggle. So she started simultaneously participating in the Sangam activities as well as in women's organization initiated by her. Enlightenment of women was part of her activities. In 1984 in Sirnapally area she worked in the agitation for the reduction of rates of arrack. In the same year the cane grower's rally was organized. She did propaganda for that rally. When the police tried to disperse the gathering of the cane growers through lathi charge and other means, Swaroopa organized the women to stand as a protective wall between the charging police and the agitating cane growers. On February 1985, during the AIRSF 1st conference she was in

the forefront in conducting a huge dharna in front of NTR's residence and was arrested. Even while participating in so many activities, she pursued her education in women's college in Nizamabad. During this time she raised revolutionary consciousness in the fellow students. The police were on the hunt for Swaroopa. She shifted her activity from the town to rural area. She became a wholetimer. There was severe repression on the squads then. Yet, she came forward to work in the plains in a guerilla squad. According to the needs of the party, she went to Hyderabad, joined as a labourer in Ampro Biscuit Factory and continued to work as an organizer. Again she returned to

rural area in 1990, and joined in Sirnapally squad as an active member. In a short time she became very popular with her squad as well as among the people. In July 1991 she became the Commander of her squad. Naturally her efforts in the growth of peasant struggle were much recognized by the people.

The repression became intensive. The police were hounding the Sirnapally squad to eliminate it. But Swaroopa went ahead by educating her squad members, resisting the police, and escaping the police ambushes with the cooperation of the people and became a darling of the peasants. When an ambush was executed at Ramadugu to retaliate the severe repression of S.P. Meena, Comrade Swaroopa showed all her mettle. The landlord clique felt threatened after this ambush. They wanted to finish off the 'Sirnapally Squad' at any cost. With this deastardly purpose, their search for the squad was made quick and wide. But only because of the informers they could locate the squad at Amrabad Tanda. In the heavy police raid, Com. Pochanna died on the spot and Swaroopa was injured. She was caught with injuries near Madapuram in a jowar field. She was arrested on 5th February, 1992, tortured and killed.

7 years of her precious life were spent in the cause of revolution for the liberation of the peasants and women. Feudal domination and superstitions could not stop the indomitable Swaroopa. She was always with the people and she fell a victim to the police bullets for the cause of liberation of the people. Comrade Swaroopa's revolutionary life inspires the qualities of sacrifice and nobleness in the comrades.

Comrade Chinna Bullekka

Martyrdom : 07-03-1992

Comrade Chinna Bullekka was a poor Adivasi woman from East Division. She was born in D.Pydipala village of Sankavaram mandal of East Godavari (EG) district. She married Appala Naidu who was a non-adivasi. He was a middle peasant. At the time of marriage both of them was just an ordinary couple. But the revolutionary movement turned them into extraordinary people. Their lives were so entwined together in the revolutionary movement that it is not possible to talk about only one of them. They were an ideal couple who had dedicated their entire lives for the people.

In 1983, there were land struggles in their village under the leadership of the Nagulakonda squad. At that time all the lands of their village were in the hands of the non-adivasis. Lands were occupied and land lords were punished at first. Appala Naidu had opposed these struggles as he was also a non-adivasi. Gradually he understood their significance and began participating in the struggles on behalf of the adivasis. He became a party member. As the president of the Rytu Coolie Sangam (RCS) he won the confidence of the people. He increased his committment and became a PR. He became a reliable organizer for the party in that area.

In this whole process Bullekka had a role. She never went to school and was very innocent. She loved the party a lot. She looked after the needs of the squad with great responsibility. She always longed to see the guerillas. If they came late she felt bad. If necessary the whole squad could depend on this single family for even a week. The childless Bullekka looked after the younger squad members as her own childrem. She always tried to feed them some delicacy.

She was not just confined to helping. She directly participated in all the struggles. Within a few days of coming into contact with the party, she joined the women's organization. She played a crucual and active role in the organization. She mobilized women for all meetings. She not only participated in the land struggles but also mobilized women into it. She led the anti-liquor struggle by mobilizing women.

When the student organization campaigned in the villages, Bullekka participated in the campaign with the team for three days. Later she told them not to go back but to join the squads. The team members were very

much influenced by her love. She participated in militant actions too. She participated in the burning of the Murugupudi bank, damaging four lorries and in creating road blockades, protesting the Pagideru encounter, where 13 comrades were killed in a fake encounter.

In the encounter at Guntuvanipalem five comrades were martyred. Bullekka was very much affected as if they were her own kith and kin. Appala Naidu wrote a song on them. Both of them propagated the song in the whole area.

Thus she dedicated her life to the party since she came into contact with it and became a party member in 1990. She always told the squad to be careful. Both of them were a loving couple who respected and loved each other. She learnt to read and write and politics from her husband. They used to call each other comrade.

Appala Naidu who was working almost like a commander in the anti-feudal struggles became a target for the land lords and consequently for the police. They began hounding him. They attacked his house when he was not there and Bullekka bravely faced the situation. Both of them began working secretely. They travelled the villages with weapons and took shelter in the forests. They conducted many struggles. She learnt to use the gun from him. There was another boy with them and three of them used to do sentries and travelled taking many precautions.

The police could not catch him and so in order to make him surrender they arrested his brothers and tortured them. They thought that if Bullekka surrenders, he would also surrender and so tried for that a lot. Her relatives were arrested and tortured. They brought a lot of pressure on the sangams and the villages. As a result all the sangam members surrendered. The police conspired in many ways to catch the couple. Even in such circumstances, Bullekka tried to mobilize the women against repression.

Finally the police succeeded. In March 1991, five or six ex-members of the sangam told them that the squad had come to Jaldam village and that they should go to meet them. The couple believed them and was going with them. The traitors suddenly pounced on them, tied them up and handed them to the police. The leader of the police party was a cruel SI named Anjaneyulu. He tortured Appala Naidu and killed him. Bullekka was threatened and sent away from there. She was shattered with grief with his death and with a burning heart, she started returning home. The police had discussed that she may reveal about this fake encounter and

ordered the sangam members to go and finish her off. They reached her on the same night, gang raped her. They buried her neck deep in a pit and killed her cruelly by hitting her with stones.

When the party later interrogated these renegades, they revealed the whole truth. They even told how Bullekka had fiercly resisted for a long time when they were tying up the couple. People annihilated Kakuri Ramanna and Tada Appa Rao who played the main role in the murders of their beloved leaders.

It is a great loss to the movement of the area to have lost this great couple in the enemy repression. Only by overthrowing this system we could pay real homage to this brave woman comrade who developed into a people's leader.

Chandravanka Martyr
Comrade Madhavilatha

Martyrdom : 01-04-1992

River Krishna- on either side of which Nalgonda and Guntur district lie- was flowing quietly. On the bank of the river was a huge mound 'Chandravanka' There our revolutionary peasant squad including a woman comrade were talking to fisher folk. Their voices were closely in resonance with rippling sounds of the river Krishna. That silence, that quietness was suddenly disturbed. On 1st April 1992, 40 police in civil dresses under the leadership of S.P. Meena, started shooting indiscriminately on them. In this incident, 4 fishermen and comrades Esu, Ramakrishna and Madhavilata lost their precious lives. The River Krishnamma, which gave them solace with cool breeze, took them into her embrace. The blood shed by the martyrs mixing with the waters of River Krishna went on spreading the message of their ideals and sacrifice to all nooks and corners of Andhra Pradesh in ripples and waves. The River Krishna went on spreading the message of their ideals through her waves. The River Krishna became vibrant with their ringing voice.

The martyrdom of Com. Madhavilata shocked the women of Andhra Pradesh. Especially the women of working class and girl students in and around the towns of Tenali, Repalle and Guntur were soaked in tears. The brutal murder of Madhavilata infuriarated them

Madavi was born in a lower middle class family in Tenali. She passed her Intermediate. Her father died and both of her elder sisters got married. So the responsibility of the family fell on the shoulders of the young Madhavi. She took it and joined a tailoring shop as a worker. In the process she became acquainted with the party. She slowly understood that the plight of her mother was not hers alone; and many many mothers in our country facad similar plight. She was convinced that the plight of these mothers can be changed only through new democratic revolution. To attain this goal, she became a whole time activist. She stood in the forefront in solving the problems of women in Tenali and Repalle areas. In Guntur, she mingled with working class women and mobilized them on many issues. In the post cyclone period, she worked not only in collecting funds, but in assuaging the pain suffered by the people. Her work during this time was wide and enormous. When the question of her marriage was

raised, she refused to marry immediately; she would work for two years and then only she would think of it, she said. She stood by her word

Extending her activities even to rural-especially the forest areas was her ideal and aspiration. She joined as guerilla especially to organize the women of the forest areas. Madhavi married Comrade Ramakrishna in March 1992. Within ten days after their marriage both the comrades became victims of the cruel state.

For a vital transformation of this society, and liberation of women, Madhavilata sacrificed her life.

Comrade Devata Janaki

Martyrdom : 17-05-1992

Every individual is unique in a way. If the lives of all martyrs are closely analyzed every one of them can be identified with some specific characteristic. Comrade Devata Janaki, while being in the village, stood in the forefront in leading armed resistance movement of oppressed peasantry. That was her unique identity in the movement.

Comrade Janaki was born in a *padmasali* (weaver) family as the last child among six sisters. She was from Sambhunipalem of Kamalapuram mandal of Karimnagar district All her sisters got married. Her father had died and her mother was old. They had no property. Work as agricultural labourer was their only source of subsistence. The mother went for work and sent Janaki to study up to 7th standard. As she could not send her for furhter studies, Janaki had to become an agriculture laborer too. She worked equally with the men and so demanded equal pay for equal work along with male laborers. At that time she did not know anything about the law regarding equal payment. But her life motivated her to think in those terms. The realities that the bourgeois education could not teach her, she could exact from the real life. So her life as a labourer led to revolutionary politics. Though her mother was anxiously intending to get her daughter married, Janaki resisted the very idea and took keen interest in the RYL activities of the village. She became a member of RYL in 1990. She was the first woman to join RYL there.She used to sing revolutionary songs in the villages around and whereever she went for work, thus inspiring people. However late night it may be, she used to meet the squad regularly. Some times her mother opposed but she convinced her and went to meet the guerillas.

She organized women laboureres and conducted a strike for increase in their wages. She followed the instructions and advice of the party in all organizational matters. She ran village people's panchayats. She led the people in punishing the wrong doers in the village, especially those who are anti people and anti-party. In this process due to her militant activities, she became a member of village protection squad (militia). When the state engaged in fake encounters killing the peasants, she played a key role in kidnapping the police, at Kesavapuram (Elkaturti mandalam) on April 14, 1992. When the police tried to escape she shot and wounded one. The enemy became restless and frightened.

So the repression on comrade Janaki became more serious and severe. To hoodwink the enemy who is very much keen on finishing the woman comrade who challenged them, Janaki changed her name as Jyothi. She was moving through villages around, organizing the people secretely. She gave encouragement to the squad members and people and won their love and confidence. She could inspire confidence in strangers too. Many times strangers also helped her, because of her sheer initiative.

Janaki was taking protection in Mallannapalli (Veenavanka mandal) at the house of a sympathizer. On 17-5-92 on the information leaked by a traitor, half a dozen police raided the house at 5 p.m. They arrested Comrade Janaki, beat her brutally with lathis, pricked pins into her nails and tortured her for three hours continuously. But they could not make her speak. Those brutes gang raped her and later shot her. Again the "story" of encounter was released. Her dead body was also not handed over to her mother. She was cremated by the police.

Her death was terrible and glorious simultaneously. Her death unveils once again the cruelty of this system and the bravery of its opponents. Such great antagonist of this society was Comrade Janaki. Red salutes to her memory!

Comrade Korra Tubri

Martyrdom : 28-07-1992

Comrade Korra Tubri belongs to Dondulagondi village of Malkangiri sub-division, in the state of Odisha. This was located in the East division (presently in AOB). She was born in a poor peasant Kuvvi adivasi family in the 70s. Tubri was influenced by revolutionary politics at a very young age. The people of her village were influenced by the struggles under the party leadership against the Kapu community atrocities in the neighbouring village. They joined the sangam with great enthusiasm. They also struggled for fair rates for their agricultural produce. Tubri was influenced with these struggles and joined the Korukonda Dalam in1986. But the party did a rethinking and sent her back home since she was not even 16 years of age. But as police of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha arrested and tortured her many times, by 1987 she was allowed to join the squad.

She was known as Seethakka since then and worked in the Ellavaram and Nagulakonda squads. She actively participated in annihilating landlords and informers and in ambushing the police.

In the legal period of 1990, many land struggles broke out in Ellavaram area on a large scale. Land lords who opposed the land struggles were brought to book in people's courts and were punished. She played an active role in all of them. Her efforts in building women's organizations in the Ellavaram area are worth mentioning. She mobilized women to oppose polygamy and forceful marriages in various tribes and consolidated them in sangams. Due to her efforts women teams were formed and they propagated about women's problems. She mobilized women on a large scale for the inauguration of the division martyrs column.

In Nagulakonda area non-adivasis are larger in number. They take adivasi women as second wives to settle there and to occupy the lands of the adivasi women. After taking their lands they either abandon them or

ignore them. Some of them lure the adivasi women and go into relations with them. They use them sexually and abandon them when they get transferred from that area. In almost all the villages such women could be found then. The women's organization had developed in the process of standing firmly on behalf of these women while punishing the men who deceived them. Gradually women played an active role in the land struggles there. They resisted the repression bravely. They protected the squads in severe repression too. Com. Tubri's role was an important one in giving women such courage.

She participated in the struggles to increase wages of labour, for fair prices for agriculture produce and against the exploitation of the forest officers. She faced the severe repression in the Nagulakonda area. While she was member of Pidithamamidi squad, she participated in the anti-liquor agitation and in the struggle for increasing the rates of tendu leaf collection and bamboo cutting.

She was active in the military field too. She came out safely from the encounters at Mohanapuram, Jadderu, and Guntuvanipalem fighting the enemy. When the police murdered five comrades at Guntuvanipalem, she participated in the ambush at Chintalammagati conducted as a protest against it. Some police were injured in this ambush.

She learnt to read and write in the squad. She married Com. Sagar (Patti Narayana) in 1988. To face the repression the Nagulakonda squad decided to extend its area of operation. As part of that extension work a four member team had gone to survey the area and stopped at Parupakala. They took shelter in Gaddi Rajaih's house as it was situated alone on one side of the village. Since it was a new area, the squad did not have an idea about the people. The party had fought against a close relative of Rajaih and he had turned against the party. That is why he gave shelter to the squad and then tipped off the police. The police gave him poison and he mixed it in the food.

On 28th July 1992 (Martyr's Day) at 4'o clock in the morning the police surrounded them and disarmed the commander of the squad Com.Vijayakumar, Mandala Mallesh, Patti Narayana and Tubri, brutally torured and killed them. Let us offer red salutes to all Parupakala martyrs. Let us pledge to realize their dream of socialist society. Tubri participated in the struggle with an ambition to destroy this society which is rabidly patriarchal. Her life is a great inspiration for revolutionaries and all women.

Comrade Marri Lakshmi

Martyrdom : 26-09-1992

Comrade Lakshmi was born in a middle class Yadava family in Vangara of Karimnagar District. She grew up in an atmosphere of anti feudal struggles; she intended to dedicate her life to it. Since 1989 she was active in the active in the activities of sangam. Her parents tried to stop her by saying that nobody would marry her if she joins Sangam. Ignoring such 'advices' she went on rallying women for the cause of revolution. She was married off at a young age. She faced many problems there and so had taken divorce. She came into contact with the squad in 1990 and was in the forefront in the wage rates, anti-arrack, tendu leaf and land struggles in the village. She was in the forefront of these struggles and led them successfully through struggle committees.

Her role in preparing people to plough the lands of the then Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao was great. She played a prominent role in seizing mangoes from his orchard. She strived to build women's organization in the village. They used to put posters on women's issues and propagate new democratic politics.

She worked at Husnabad for the building of Martyrs Column (the second highest in Asia before the police has blasted it) continuously for seven months, till its completion. She led the women comrades who worked there and solved any problems they faced, with much responsibility. But later her family took her away from there forcefully. She continued participating in the struggles in the villages. She participated in many struggles including agitations for house-sites and beedi leaves workers' movements. Her parents tried to marry her off in order to dissuade her from these activities. They had even fixed the date. But she opposed this marriage and resisted her family's pressure.

In 1990 she became a professional revolutionary (PR) and joined the Husnabad squad. She was very friendly with her fellow guerillas and learnt politics with interest. From the moment she came into contact with the People's War party till her last breath she fought for the liberation of oppressed people.

When the squad was in a shelter in the village of Achampalli, 1500 BSF police surrounded the village on information by Papireddy. The police

were raining bullets on the house where the squad was meeting. The squad also retaliated bravely. After 4 hours of heroic fight the squad killed two BSF Jawans. In that struggle the district committee member comrade Nallapa Mallesh (Comrade Ramanna) and squad members comrades Raji reddy (Suranna), Rama rao (Ailanna), Ramesh (Seenu) , Lakshmi (Aruna) ,Buchanna (Sampath) , Komaranna (Vijay), Lachanna (Sekhar) died. Along with them the sympathizer Raji Reddy who gave them shelter was killed too.

When hundreds of police surrounded them, Comrade Lakshmi and other Achampalli martyrs did not flinch a bit and tried to break out of the enemy's encirclement.

Let us offer our red salutes to the bravery of comrade Lakshmi and other martyrs of Achampally. Let us also pledge that we will avenge their deaths.

Comrade Sedmak Seethakka

Martyrdom : 1992

Adivasi women are oppressed in various ways - on one side there is exploitation by forest officers and paper mill owners; on another side the social repression in the name of customs and traditions. Today Adivasi women are getting organized to fight against exploitation of many years and authority of generations of tribal chiefs. Throughout Dandakaranya, Krantikari Adivasi Women's Organization (KAMS) is being built-up.

This organization was first organized in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra. It expanded to all ranges of the district in a short time. After the formation of this women's organization in all the ranges of the forest, the struggle for the specific rights of women- i.e. the oppressive customs and traditions of Adivasi society, the bureaucracy of forest officers were the main issues that gained strength. Comrade Seethakka was in the forefront of all organizational activities in her area.

Adivasi people participated in many struggles for their rights on the forest and against *bogus Sarkar*. Without the participation of the women, no struggle would have been possible. And in every struggle women were in forefront. The growing consciousness regarding the struggle and political enlightenment among the women frightened the enemy. They wanted to suppress the people's struggles by hook or crook. So they tightened their iron fists. They destroyed large number of villages; they jailed hundreds of men and women. And they murdered sangam leaders and people in fake encounters.

Seethakka's husband was an organizer of DAKMS. Comrade Seethakka was the leader of KAMS. Day by day, the pressure on them increased. To overcome this, they went on travelling village after village secretly and organizing political activity. In that process, the health of Seethakka deteriorated and she joined the hospital. There the police rounded her and saw that no medical help reached her, and caused her death.

Seethakka gave her life to the people and raised the banner of the struggle higher. Let us pledge to continue her struggle. Let us work for building the communist society.

Comrade Hallami Sukai

Martyrdom : May 1992

Sukai joined the women's organization formed in 1991 in her village and used to work for solving the problems of the village women by mingling with them. She used to gather women for the meetings of revolutionary mass organizations held in the village. She also participated actively in the public meeting held to expose the false propaganda by the police against naxalites. In May 1992, the government, during the season of collecting tendu leaves, deputed SAF soldiers in large numbers and forcibly had the leaves plucked. At this time Sukai married into Badko village. Due to illness, she was taken to a quack doctor of the village. All of a sudden, policemen arrived in the village and while searching each house, had intruded into the house where Sukai was staying. At that time there were not many people in the village. An officer named Pandey arrested Sukai and falsely alleging that she tried to join the squad, forced her to reveal the whereabouts of the squad. Taking advantage of her being alone, he raped her. An old woman was also present there, but the police drove her away. Due to this dreadful act, the already ill Sukai died on the same evening. After hearing this news, the police warned the headmen of the village that if they propagate this news they would arrest them and book cases against them. In spite of getting cruelly raped by the policemen, Sukai refused to reveal anything about the squad. In the history of revolutionary movement of Bastar, one more woman got martyred sacrificing her life. We humbly bow our heads and say 'Lal Salaam to Sukai!'

Comrade Korram Sukadi Bai Salami

Martyrdom : September 1992

Sukadi Bai, a 25-year-old *Gond* woman belonged to the village Killem of Kondagaon tehsil situated in Bastar district. Whenever the Kondagaon squad visited their village, Sukadi Bai used to bring food and water for the guerrillas. Besides participating in the meetings of women in the village, she was amazed to see how the Party respected women. In the beginning days when on seeing the guerrilla squad, people used to run away with fear, Sukadi Bai without any fear came to meet the squad and tried to understand the revolutionary politics. Sukadi bai also tried to mobilize the women in the village organization. During the repression campaign started by the enemy in September 1991, police raided the village Killem, searched every house, ransacked them, stole their belongings and committed atrocities. At that time Sukadi Bai was six months pregnant. On the pretext of arresting naxalites, the SAF terrorized them by entering her house and ransacking all the household goods, not leaving even the eggs. Sukadi Bai resisted the SAF soldiers in order to save her belongings. Enraged at her resistance, the policemen beat her with the butts of their guns and tortured her mercilessly without thinking even for a while that she was pregnant. Sukadi Bai was injured seriously due to this torture and within a week she died. They tortured Sarpanch Ramsingh in various brutal means and beat him to death too.

The newspapers printed this incident prominently and the people strongly condemned the atrocities of the police.

The attempts of the state to separate party from the people – as good as separating fish from water – were ignored by comrade Sukhidi who saved the squads, and got a permanent place in the hearts of people. Today all the adivasis throughout Dandakaranya are taking Sukhidi's path.

Comrade Gangakka (Swarna)

Martyrdom : 05-12-1992

Com. Gangakka was born in Alampalli of Adilabad district in a poor family. She was attracted towards the revolutionary songs since her childhood. She had a melodious voice and she used to sing songs on martyrs by learning them by heart. She attended the Girijan Rytu Coolie Sangam second district conference in 1983 at Adilabad at the young age of 10. The songs she sang on the stage inspired the people a lot.

She even used to compose songs with her own tunes and lyrics. While working in the fields she used to sing and encouraged others to sing along with her. She became a member of the village women's organization and fought against caste oppression and feudal traditions. She participated in the struggles for wage increases and fair rates for tendu leaves. She understood that new democratic revolution alone would pave the way for the liberation of women and propagated these politics among women.

In 1991 she married a person from the Reddy caste. It was a love marriage. His parents did not allow her to enter their house saying she was from a lower caste. Gangakaka and her husband were not to be bound by these narrow caste confinements. They joined the party to fight against all kinds of exploitation and the rid the society of all kinds of discriminations. Gangakka was 20 years old when she joined the party. She learnt to read and write in the party. Within three months of her joining the squad an encounter with the police took place at Tulsipeta. She was injured in her thigh and fell down unconscious in the cotton field. The combing police batches found her there on 5-12-1992 and killed her in cold blood.

The revolutionary movement had lost a sincere worker and a great singer and song writer whose songs smelt of the earth.

Comrade Nukalamma

Martyrdom : 1992

Nukalamma (30) was born in a poor peasant family of Kondakammari tribe of East Godavari district. She married a person from Adilabad village in Rajavommangi mandal and settled there. This falls under the Nagulakonda area. She participated in all the struggles of that area and gradually developed into a women's organization leader. She participated in all the struggles which were conducted in 1991 and 1992 - struggles for increase in wage rates, land struggles, bamboo coolie struggles, struggles for fair prices for tendu leaf and tobacco.She participated in the militant struggle when teak plantations were cut down and seized by the people. She was in the forefront mobilizing people against the exploitation of GCC. She solved many problems of the people in people's courts and gained recognition as a mass leader. Especially when non-adivasis had deceived adivasi women in the name of marriage, she had punished the culprits in many such incidents. She came forth as an important opposition against the landlords and bad gentry. So they sent their police dogs after her. In 1992, police raided their village and tortured her cruelly in front of everybody and then killed her in cold blood.

Com. Nukalamma was killed as she fought against the injustices perpetrated in this society. Her martyrdom will not go in vain. With her inspiration the next generations would continue the fight agaisnt injustice.

Comrade Srilatha

Martyrdom : 24-01-1993

Comrade Srilata (Padmakka) was born in a poor goldsmith family in Narmetta of Warangal District. At a very early age Srilata lost her mother. Even while doing domestic work at home, she studied up to 9th class. Her father had lost his eyesight. So she learnt tailoring and helped her brothers economically. She was influenced by revolutionary peasant struggles in her area. She joined in women's organization and participated actively in organizing the women. In 'Go to villages' campaign of 1989, she actively participated and tried to enlighten the people on various issues. By the end of 1990 she decided to become a full timer for the party. She became a member in Ghanapur squad. She gained respect and love of all the members. She participated in the attacks on police in retaliation against the police repression. She proved a match to the men in the fight. She married Com. Anjanna (Balanna) in 1991.

Srilatha and Com. Anjanna had gone to Hyderabad for treatment. An informer had tipped off the police about their shelter and the police arrested them. They were killed in the same house with pistols having silencers and then their bodies were thrown near Jangaon. The police concocted an encounter story as usual.

She marched in the revolutionary path till her last breath. Her life stands an inspiration to all the women.

Comrade Rukmabai

Martyrdom : 27- 01-1993

On 27th January, 1993 comrade Rukmabai (Vijaya) was killed along with comrade Sankar (North Telangana RCM). She was very sick at the time of her death. She was born in Tippapur of Medak district. Right from 1986 she was actively working in her own village in the activities of 'Sangam' especially in organizing the bidi workers. From 1989 her dedication to party work increased. She was very active in the anti-arrack struggle. In June 1989, she joined in Kamareddy squad as a whole time member. As a good leader and disciplined squad member, she became very respectable among the people of that area-. In 1991, she married a comrade. She saw to it that her married life and revolutionary life are in no way contradictory. She continued her revolutionary practice with increased determination.

Comrade (Vijaya) Rukmabai was in a private house to get treatment for a serious health problem. Police rounded up the house and shot her. She was sure of her death in the hands of police. Without revealing any secrets she laid down her life. Comrade Rukmabai's heritage is a pride possession of the revolutionaries. She is an exemplary revolutionary. Revolutionary flames roused by her will ultimately engulf the exploiters.

Medaram Martyrs

Martyrdom : 15-04-1993

On 15-04-1993, comrades of Eturunagaram squad went to get water from a water tank nearby Medaram village. While coming back to the forest den, the enemy did an opportunity ambush and Sarada and Sammakka laid down her lives

Comrade Premlatha (Sarada)

Com. Premlatha was born in a poor family in Sultanabad village of Karimnagar district Her father died when she was still a baby. Her mother had to look after the whole family alone. Premlatha had many siblings. Her mother rolled beedis and stitched clothes. In spite of the tight economic situation, she could send her children to school and Premlatha completed her Intermediate course. Premlatha used her academic knowledge to think about the reasons behind poverty of which she was also a victim. She came to know about the activities of PW and decided to dedicate her life for the cause of new democratic revolution in India. She tried for party contact. Some lumpens deceived her saying they would get her party contact and harassed her. But she withstood this bravely and finally got the party contact.

Premlatha wanted to directly join the squad but the party suggested that she work for some time in the village Sangam to gain work experience and to learn revolutionary politics more. She worked in her village and another neighboring village for six months as a teacher in a private school. In these six months she developed her contacts with the party and did some necessary works for the movement. By end 1990, Premlatha was recruited into the party and she was sent as a squad member to the Eturunagaram squad. She was very fragile and squad members had doubts if she could withstand the hard life of the guerilla. But she proved that all those doubts were unnecessary and developed into a fine guerilla.

It was her determined effort which sustained her till her last breath inside the movement.

Premlatha was always cheerful and frankly expressed her opinions. She changed her name to Sarada and served the people of her area as a doctor. She worked as a teacher to the squad members. She herself became ill but still carried on her duties with patience.

Summer was the testing time for the squads and guerillas had to face many hardships. Water became scarce and getting water many risks. On 15-04-1993, Sarada went to get water from a water tank nearby Medaram village along with other comrades. While coming back to the forest den, the enemy did an opportunity ambush and Sarada laid down her life along with Sammakka.

The lives of these immortal martyrs will always serve as an inspiration.

Comrade Chintha Sammakka (Rama)

Com. Sammakka was born in a poor adivasi family in Chelpaka village, Eturunagaram mandal, Warangal district. Her mother died when she was a child and her father was a drunkard. She was the eldest daughter and so the responsibility of the family fell on her. She looked after her younger brother and two sisters. Her body was steeled with hard labour. She married the man she loved, defying the adivasi traditions there.

Her husband was a RYL activist. He used to work day and night for the organization. In the beginning, Sammakka did not understand these politics and used to fight with him demanding that he stop working for RYL. Even his sisters used to support her as they were also opposed to their brother's participation in these activities. But he was very firm and did not waver under their pressure. The repression on him

increased and he had to go underground as a full timer. So inevitably Sammakka had to come and meet the squad if she wanted to meet him and know about his welfare.

When she met the squad, she saw with her own eyes how loving and caring they were with each other and how they were striving for the common good of the people. Mainly she was inspired by their determination to sacrifice anything for the sake of the people. So she too decided to dedicate her life for the movement and told the party.

She joined the squad as a full timer in 1992 and worked in the Manuguru squad. Since she was a hard worker from her childhood, she withstood all the rigours of the squad life easily. She carried the heaviest luggages of the squad. She learnt to read and write with determination. In the military camp, she could jump a longer distance than the men comrades in the pit jump item. She had good memory and within a short period she learnt to remember which medicine to give for the different ailments. Soon she became the doctor of her squad. She worked as Rama in the Manuguru, Pandava and Kinnera squads for about two years as a party member.

When Sammakka went to bring water from the Medaram village tank for the squad she was hit by the police in an opportunity raid by them and died. Such a promising working class leader was lost to the movement inflicting a great loss to the revolution. She was just 25 years old when she died.

Comrade Shantakka

Martyrdom : 19-05-1993

Comrade Santhakka was born in a 'Gonda' family of Cheryal (in Warangal District). In the beginning Santhakka opposed the participation of her husband Com. Sattenna in party activities. In due course, observing the politics and practice of the party, she also decided to work as a full timer. Leaving their son behind, she became a member of the squad of which Sattenna was the commander and spent two years of harsh squad life. Comrade Santhakka became literate only after joining the party. She used to be in the forefront of all kinds of works in the squad and used to express her views without any hesitation. She played her role in solving the problems arising in the squad. With the information given by a traitor, comrades Sattenna and Santhakka were arrested by the police when they came out for medical treatment. But police could not get a single piece of information from these ideal communists even after very cruel torture and so shot them dead and repeated the usual fake story of encounter. Though knowing the whereabouts of Chityala squad, the firm determination of comrade Santhakka in not revealing the information and saving the lives of many comrades is exemplary to others. To see the bodies of their beloved leaders thousands of people came defying the police repression. Even enduring the lathi charge, they paid their homage to those martyr comrades and took an oath to take their path.

Comrade Muthyalu

Martyrdom : 30-06-1993

Though some people are not activists, they support the movement with all their being. Muthyalu was one such comrade. Muthyalu (55) belonged to Zinkibadra village of Sompeta mandal in Srikakulam district. She came into contact with the movement through her husband Com. Goru Madhava Rao. She understood his progressive ideology and supported him in all manners. When he worked in the communist movement and also when he went underground during the Srikakulam movement, she faced all kinds of adversities along with her two young children. She always looked after the activists who visited their home with lot of affection. In that manner she supported the Srikakulam movement.

Then Emergency was declared and Madhava Rao was arrested. He had to spend a long time in jail. She withstood bravely this severe repression too.

In 1982, Rao was released. When the party asked them to go underground according to party needs, she did not hesitate even for a moment. She had already gone through a lot because her husband was a revolutionary activist. The fact that she unhesitantly went underground shows that these adversities did not deter her in the least. She was in UG life from 1985 to 1990 and did many technical works of the party. She helped the party in many ways later too. She always contributed as much as she can to all meetings held in the state or her district. She showered affection on the activists like a mother.

Since both of them were activists in the movement they did not have any property. They could not give anything to their two daughters when they were married. But Muthyalu never felt bad that she could not give them anything. She understood the situation politically. Instead she felt proud that she was with the movement.

She died of illness on June 30, 1993. The revolutionary movement had lost an affectionate touch with her death.

Comrade Vennela (Leelamma)

Martyrdom : 1993

Comrade Vennela was born in a very poor Dalit agricultural labourer family in the village of Bondalapalli in Nagarkurnool taluk of Mahaboobnagar district. Seventeen year old Vennela had five sisters. She was brought up quite fondly. She was in a hostel and studied up to 9th class. After that, her parents got her married. She was then only 15 years old. Her husband, a governent employee in Wanaparthy harassed her immediately after the marriage for not bringing enough dowry. Her parents-in-law also harassed her mentally. Unable to bear this torture, she divorced her husband and stayed with her parents. In that process she came into contact with the peasant guerilla squad of that area.

She attended the second state RCS conference at Warangal in May 1990. Taking notice of her melodious voice and her willingness to become a full time activist, party sent her to Anantapur as a delegate from Mahaboobnagar district, to attend the training classes by JNM.

Comrade Vennela always used to raise the question of equality of women with men. She always used to wear pants and shirt like a male. With good intiative to mingle with people, she won the love and confidence of people.

After the JNM classes, she expressed her willingness to become a full time activist. Party advised her to become trained as a nurse. For that purpose, she again started living in Wanaparthy. During that period, her former husband pretended that he loved her, but only with the cruel intention of killing her. He could make her believe him and one day he took her to a well outside Wanaparthy. His brother, brother-in-law and another friend were already waiting there. They molested her and then wrote a suicide note and forcibly took her signature on that note. Then she was strangled to death and thrown in the well.

Comrade Vennela who was willing to become a full time activist for accomplishing new democratic revolution became a victim of dowry and male chanvinism in patriarchial society and has become a martyr.

Destroying the economic and political factors which are the root cause for patriarchy is the true tribute that we can offer to comrade Vennela.

Comrade Sakkubai (Aruna)

Martyrdom : 1993

Com. Aruna was born in Timmayapalli of Medak district in a poor family. 900 acres of *patta* land of a big land lord Narsimha Reddy of her village was occupied by the people under the leadership of the party. She wanted to be part of the struggle which would unshackle the feudal chains of her people. She used to bring her friends also to meet the squad. Since she lived in poverty from childhood, economic problems were not new to her. She not only used to weed and cut the harvest but also did difficult jobs like ploughing, slicing wood etc along with her brothers. Along with helping her family in the fields, she used to make beedis to help sustain her family. When her fathrer harassed her mother, she supported her mother by standing up against him. She helped her mother in the household work and showered the love of a mother on her brothers. Such was the personality of Sakkubai.

In 1988, Sakkubai came full time into the party and worked as Aruna in the Ellareddy squad for some time. Then she worked in Bhimgal in the name of Lakshmi. She met the women workers in the beedi factories and explained to them about the exploitation of *seths* and *munims*. She encouraged them to join the sangams and prepared them to fight for their rights. She mobilized the support of other sections of people for the struggles of wage labourers. The Gonugoppula land lord America Chenna Reddy was annihilated and his car was blasted in order to control the land lords who stood against the land occupation struggles of the peasantry. She displayed good initiative in this struggle. She was in the forefront in punishing many goons, informers and oppressors of people. She won the enormous confidence of the people of her area and tried to fulfill her responsibility as a cell member in the squad well.

Aruna had always tried to organize and lead the people into struggles even amidst severe repression. Though she suffered from severe stomach ache many times and had become sick with other illnesses, she worked in the squad with renewed determination climbing hills and walking in the forests. She is a role model of a people's leader which all of us have to emulate.

Aruna died in an encounter with the police near Bhairanpur in Banswada area of Nizamabad district in 1993.

Padkal Martyrs

Martyrdom : 09-09-1993

Comrade Padma (Vijaya)

On September 9, 1993, a six member squad had taken shelter in Padkal village in Nizamabad district. 550 police and para military forces surrounded the village. The squad fought for about 24 hours with the enemy heroically. The commander killed an STF police and seized an AK-47 from him and escaped safely from the encirclement in one of the most heroic incidents in the history of the movement. The squad members Vijaya, Lalitha were martyred along with three more members in this incident.

Com. Padma was born in a middle class family in Bachanpalli village, Bhimgal mandal of Nizamabad district. Her parents stopped sending her to school after she finished her primary school with the feudal ideology that girls don't need higher studies. 19 year old Padma used to roll beedies at home. She was inspired by the anti-feudal struggles breaking in her village and in the neighbouring villages. She tried for party contact and after finding the squad, expressed her wish to join it. The party advised her to work in the village among women for some time and increase her political understanding. She heeded the advice.

Her parents were against her working in the party and so they sent to her away to their relatives' house for some days. But Padma again got hold of the contact of the party and joined the squad in the beginning of 1993. She worked as Vijaya in the Sirnapalli squad. She used to mingle with all the old and new members in the squad like an old friend.

On 9-9-1993, the squad took shelter in Padkal. After finishing their meals at night, she came downstairs and was talking with the house owner when the police surrounded the house with specific information about the squad. Padma was caught unarmed and killed after severe torture even

while the encounter was going on. Padma laid down her life for the cause of revolution at a very young age. Let us emulate her ideals.

Comrade Lalitha

Com. Lalitha was born in Padkal village of Jakranpalli mandal of Nizamabad. She belonged to a poor, dalit family. She had a younger brother. Her parents named her Pushpa. She could not go to school at home. She learnt to read and write in the party. She was married at home and had a son named Raju. Her husband was Com. Prasad. His name was Rajanna at home. After his son's birth, he joined the party. After he joined the party, he taught revolutionary politics to Pushpa and inspired her to join the party. Padkal was also a centre of revolutionary activities and that also had a good impact on her. So decided to join the party leaving her baby boy at home. She worked in the Sirnapalli squad in 91, in Ellareddypet squad in 1992 and in the Bichkunda squad in 1993. Com. Prasad died in an encounter in a field in Mylaram village of Bichkunda mandal in 1992. She overcame that grief and continued firlmly in the party. This was not easy for her as he was her friend and guide. She mingled well with the comrades in the squad and with the people in the villages. She was a model guerilla in doing collective works in the squad and was disciplined.

She used to look very innocent when at home and did not have any education. But she not only learnt to read and write but began reading party literature and also became a teacher in the squad to other members. This is no small achievement for a poor peasant woman. The names of comrades Prasad and Lalitha had figured in the lists of rewards for naxalites. So the police had given statements many times asking them to surrender and take the money. But they never wavered and continued to work with renewed committment. Just 2, 3 days before her martyrdom she met her family members. She died in Padkal which was her own village. She was a party member in the squad.

Comrade Velpula Bhagyalakshmi

Martyrdom : 27-10-1993

Let us remember the sacrifice and ideals established by Comrade Velpula Bhagyalakshmi (Shobha) who dedicated her life for the cause of revolution. Velpula Bhagyalakshmi was born 31years ago in Hanamkonda in a poor family. Though Hanamkonda is an education centre, Bhagyalakshmi could not even complete her high school education. She came in to contact with the revolutionary movement in the year 1982-83 and started working secretly. Since 1985, she had been working for the party as a whole timer and in the process sacrificed her life, and became a martyr in 1993.

Comrades Bhagyalakshmi and Puli Anjaiah (Sagar) got married in 1985. Since then she had taken up responsibility of the technical work for the North Telangana regional committee for some time. She had to change towns and cities as part of her work in technical mechanism. She preserved state committee's funds, secret papers, arms and ammuniation. She learnt Hindi, English and Kannada languages very quickly to mingle with the people around her so as to avoid any technical problems that can arise. Though she did not have any certificates, she joined a private nursing home as a nurse on her own initiative and improved her position to a nurse in operation theatre. Soon she gained the confidence of the surgeons as an efficient nurse and saved the health and lives of many patients. In spite of her deteriorating health, she struggled to keep up her commitment till her last breath.

She worked as a squad member for sometime and attended political classes in North Telangana.

Bhagyalakshmi had to stay in far off places from movement areas, in

the dens where arms and ammunitions required for the armed struggle are hidden. She not only had left her family but also took a decision not to have children with the thought that they may become a hurdle in her revolutionary path. Com. Sagar was burdened with many responsibilities and was away in the movement areas for long periods of time without any communication with her. So it was a lonely life for her. This was especially difficult for her mentally because she loved to be with the people and squads always. But she withstood all this for the sake of her work in revolution.

Her elder brother was kidnapped and killed by the police in 1988, as he was an activist of the party. Her younger brother also was killed when a gun went off accidentally in his hand while he was working as a squad member in Medak. Though she lost her two brothers, Bhagyalakshmi did not loose her heart but fought till her last breath with intensifying class hatred on this exploitative system. The ideals established by her as a dedicated and efficient comrade in the technical machanism are commendable. The tradition of sacrifice demonstrated by comrade Bhagyalakshmi shall inspire the entire women folk to give the grave of this exploitative society.

Let us raise our fists in pledge to carry on the ideals of Comrade Bhagyalakshmi.

Friends and Sympathizers of Revolutionary Movement

Dr. Com. Karuna at the time of her death was working for Post and Telegraphs department as medical officer. She was 45 years old then. She was the daughter of Comrade Kondapalli Seetharamaiah. Brought up in the lap of revolution, Karuna became sympathizer for the revolutionary movement and an admirer of revolutionary cultural movement and civil liberties movement. Doctor Karuna used to respond against the atrocities on women and gave moral support too to many women in addition to medical help. She wrote a column in the women's page named Manavi in a Telugu daily Udayam under the title "Which doctor can cure these diseases?" In this column, she exposed the social, economic and political factors behind the illnesses, especially of women. Her writings were published under the name 'Tarjani', the title of one of her stories. Though the volume is small, all her writings show her depth and feelings and understanding of women's problems. She had a lucid and simple style of writing and was a promising woman writer. Her writings were very thought provoking. As a member of Mahila Sravanthi, she used to take classes for women about the physiologyof the human body. She used to get inspired by the sacrifices made by the women comrades and provided active support as a sympathizer to the revolutionary movement inspiring others till her last breath.

Comrade Eswari who committed suicide owing to the harassment of her husband, was a member of Revolutionary Writers Association (Virasam). She studied privately amidst difficulties and participated in the revolutionary literary struggle with her own initiative. In the last two years of her 29 years of life she worked for Virasam. She used to work as a proof reader in a press and she participated actively in the Krishna district unit of Virasam. Eswari invited revolution whole heartedly.

Comrade Chimri

Martyrdom : 1993

Chimri was born in Pokkur village of Taadigaon Range of Gadchiroli division. The revolutionary movement of Gadchiroli attracted many oppressed people of division towards it. Chimri was one among them. She raised her voice against the oppression on women by clan elders in the name of adivasi rites and customs. She joined the ongoing struggle against the sexual harassment of adivasi women by the officers of paper mills in Gadchiroli and against naked plundering by the tendu leaf contractors. During this period she developed from being an active member of KAMS to be a member of Range Committee of KAMS. Chimri, who was participating in the struggle with determination for achieving the liberation of women through New Democratic Revolution, met an untimely death due to illness in 1993. Thus revolutionary women's movement of Gadchiroli division had lost a dedicated leader.

Comrade Vijayalakshmi

Martyrdom : 15-04-1994

Com. Vijayalakshmi was born in Gonugoppala village of Bhimgal mandal in Nizamabad district in a middle class family. She used to roll beedis for a living. This is like a household work in all the villages there. Thousands of women choose to do this work as a secondary work in making a living. The company owners and middle men used to deceive the workers in many ways using their helpless condition. They used to weigh the leaves in a faulty manner and just took away a bundle of beedis for free. Vijayalakshmi was a straight forward person and she opposed the injustices perpetuated by the owners on them. At the same time she was deceived by a young man who had loved her. She got the contact of the squad in 1990 and explained her problem. With the help of the squad she married him. But his nature did not change and he left her and ran away from the village. Vijaya met the squad again and shared her problem. The squad tried to explain to her the nature of the problem as part of the patriarchal, feudal society which gave a free leash to men over women. Gradually she developed her understanding about the problems of women in this society and decided to join the party in order to establish a society where women and men are equal. The party suggested to her to work for some time in the village organizing women and gain experience. According to that suggestion, she worked for one year and developed her understanding about many issues.

She was recruited into the Banswada squad in the beginning of 1993 and later was transferred to Sircilla squad. In both these areas, police patrolling was intense and she had to work cleverly avoiding them. Especially she was interested in working on women's problems. She came

closer to the women and mingled well with them. In that period the anti-arrack struggle rose up on a big scale. People attacked arrack and brandy shops under the leadership of the party. As part of this campaign, the squad was resting near a well in the fields and the police attacked them with information.

On April 15, 1994 police surrounded the squad sleeping near a well in the fields in Pothireddypalli village of Ellareddypet mandal. Comrades Vijayalakshmi and Devraju were injured and caught alive by the police. They tortured them for four hours asking them to reveal the names of militants and the whereabouts of party dumps. Since they could not extract anything from them, they just killed them brutally and concocted an 'encounter' story.

Comrade Hasina Begum

Martyrdom : May 1994

Com. Hasina was born in Kulaspur village, Dichpalli mandal, Nizamabad district She was married but her husband harassed her a lot and so she came back to her parent's home along with her son. She lived with her mother and brother and went to work as a labourer. Her brother Shadul was in the RYL and his friends who were activists in RYL and other militants used to come to their home. She was affectionate with them and gave them food and shelter. She preserved party material. She looked after the squad like her own kith and kin even in the most difficult times. She was in the forefront of all struggles in her village.

The Kulaspur land lords and bad gentry goaded the police to attack the houses of the activists to impede the activities of the Sangam. On the other hand the landlords' goons terrorized the people and opposed all party activities in the villages. Com. Buchanna was the Sangam leader of Badsi, a nearby village. He was killed in a fake encounter and the Kulaspur, Badsi people were so enraged by this that they killed the SP's gunmen in the same place where the police had killed Buchanna. This gunman belonged to Kulaspur. So the police used this as an excuse and provoked the goons of land lords to attack the house of Shadul. But Shadul was not at home and so they dragged Hasina by her hair into the bazar and beat her black and blue asking her about her brother. She was stripped and no part of her body was spared from the beatings. Not stopping at that, they tied her neck and limbs and threw her in a bonfire. She ran and tried to hide herself in drainage but she was not spared. They brought her back and burnt her alive in front of all the villagers in that bonfire.

Hasina's death shows how cruel the feudal forces can be when they are challenged by the oppressed and are afraid that they would lose their authority.

Red Salutes to Com. Hasina!

Comrade Putlibai (Geetha)

Martyrdom : 03-06-1994

On June 3, 1994, the police surrounded the squad in Vaddur situated in the Bodh area of Adilabad district and in that encounter comrades Reddy Bhimanna and Putlibai had died a heroic death fighting the enemy.

Putlibai was born in the Mangi village in a poor family. She was attracted towards revolutionary politics ever since she was a child. As her brother was the district president of the Girijan Rytu Coolie Sangam, her house and village were the centres for Sangam activities. She learnt to read and write singing martyrs songs. She used to oppose oppressive adivasi traditions and customs and participated in the Sangam activities. She studied till 4th standard in her village. Though she was the only daughter of her parents, they never stopped her activities. She used to go to work in the fields and explain to the girls and women working there about the exploitation by paper mill owners and the sahukars. She exhorted the women to fight against all kinds of oppression by joining the revolutionary movement. She became a member of the Mangi area KAMS. She led the propaganda batch which propagated revolutionary politics in Mangi area. She was in the forefront in the land struggles and struggles for wage increase. She led the KAMS women in the famine raid at Dandepalli. She led the people in burning the loan deeds.

Her brother was killed in a fake encounter and this increased her class hatred. She joined the Mangi squad as Geetha. She worked for some time in the Wankidi squad too. Then she was transferred to Khanapur. She used to teach others to read and write in the squad. She attended political classes conducted by the party. She attended the military camp and trained as a guerilla. She fulfilled the responsibility of the rear guard in the squad. Seeing her commitment and determination, she was given party membership.

Geetha expressed her opinions frankly in the meetings. She criticized male domination in any form and taught women comrades to fight male domination.

Geethakka was given the responsibility of blasting the clamour mine in the squad whenever the enemy attacks. On June 3, 1994, in an encounter with the police, she tried to blast the mine but it did not go off. She was hit in the thigh in this encounter. But she tried to retreat while continuing to fire even in that immobile condition. She was hit in the back while she was retreating and died there.

The dreams and aims of Geetha will always remain with us, guiding us in our pursuit of a classless society.

Comrade Padmakka

Martyrdom : 29-09-1994

Com. Padma was born in Adoni town of Kurnool district. She joined in RSU while studying BSc in Arts and Science College in Adoni. She put efforts to mobilize women into RSU. Padma was a good orator and had inspired people with her speeches when she worked legally in RSU. She was a good singer and dancer and she fully utilized her cultural talents for propagating revolutionary politics creatively. She wrote songs and dance dramas on women's issues and taught the cadre the steps and how to act. She had a husky voice but she brought such liveliness and feeling into it that people never minded how her voice was and awaited her songs. She was a multi-talented person and one who utilized all those talents to the full for the revolution.

Padma married Com. Linga Murthy (APSCM martyred in 2002). They were an ideal couple and still are remembered whenever comrades have to give example of an ideal couple. She gave birth to a son and had to be away from her work for four years due to this. It was a period of severe repression too, the undeclared war period from 1985 to 1989. But Padma continued undeterred in the movement as a PR while looking after her son. But she was not comfortable with the fact that she was away from active work and was thinking of joining work as soon as possible. Padma was a person who loved people deeply and naturally her bond with her son was very deep too. It was not an easy decision. But she knew she would take it one day. Finally, Padma left her son when he was three years old and again joined her work as an organizer. She worked as a CO in Tirupati from 1990 and built up the women's movement in a wide variety of sections there. She was one of the best organizers both among men and women and the way she built up a network of contacts in urban areas is worth emulating. She tried to involve every person who came

into her contact in some way or the other.

Padma was one of the key persons in building women's movement in Andhra Pradesh, especially in the urban areas. She had laid the foundations for the state women's movement. She had exposed the limitations and short comings in feminist ideology and upheld the proletarian view on women's question. She participated in running a statewide women's magazine and wrote many articles and literary pieces for it. She wrote for other revolutionary magazines like Radical March and Aruna Tara too. The series of articles she wrote analyzing the female characters in Ramayana, Mahabharata and some other puranas created a stir and some conservatives wrote countering them too. She had tried to understand the socio-economic conditions in which those women had taken the decisions in their lives and tried to put before the readers the patriarchal aspects in that society. She had been the key person in writing some papers for seminars held on women issues.

Padma was chosen to be a member of the first ever women's sub-committee formed in the party. It was formed at the AP level in mid -1994. But even before it held its first meeting, Padma was martyred in September. She would have led the committee if she had been alive. It is a loss for the women's movement that it had lost her before she could do so.

Padma held the promise of becoming a state and central level leader of the party within a short time. The party had realized her potential and that was why she was chosen as the first state level delegate to the plenum. She was a delegate to the AP state plenum in 1992, the first woman delegate to attend a state level plenum in the history of CPI (ML) (PW). She attended the AP state plenum in 1994 with another woman delegate and had actively participated in all the discussions on documents on both the occassions. She played a key role in bringing up the problems of building women's movement in the state to the attention of the delegates.

Padma was caught along with APSCM Com. Chintala Venkata Swamy in Nellore town on September 29, 1994 and both of them were killed in a fake encounter after severely torturing them. Their badly mutilated bodies showed the extent of the tortures they bore but they did not reveal a word. Padmakka knew the whereabouts of many comrades and shelters but she never opened her mouth. Padmakka stands as an ideal in many aspects while she was alive and also in her death. The Maoist women's movement had suffered the most serious loss with the martyrdom of a

great leader like Padma. Her loss is irreparable. She used to think about women's movement in her sleep too. Such was her commitment towards the women's movement.

Even in the vast movement, leaders like Padma are rare. She is the rarest of rare women who had the potential to develop into a central level leader of the party. On the personal level too, she was a very loving and caring comrade who had left an indelible print on one and all. She was brutally frank while fighting patriarchal tendencies in the party and is one of the pioneers of the fight against it in the whole party. She had the immense confidence of the women comrades in the party and could influence all classes and sections of people. Anybody who met her once would never forget her lively eyes and the radiant smile. The bondage was instant.

She had severe health problems and suffered due to them. But the smile never left her face. She took all these problems in her stride and worked hard untiringly for the people. She loved her partner a lot but would be the first one to criticize his shortcomings if any. Such was the comradely relation between the ideal couple. Younger couples always looked to them for inspiration and example.

A book had been published after her martyrdom with all her writings and with memorial poems and writings written about her.

Manthena Rajavva

Martyrdom : December 1994

Rajavva was born in a poor family in Lakkepur village of Manthani mandal in Karimnagar district She was not in any way connected with the party or the Sangam in the village. In December 1994, the ruling classes had brought Punjab Commandos into the villages of Telangana to terrorize the people during the elections. When they came to Lakkepur village, Rajavva who had already heard about the atrocities these commandos were perpertrating on the people was afraid and was locking the door of her house in order to go away to some other place. The Commandos asked her in Hindi to open the door. Since Rajavva did not know Hindi she did not understand what they were saying. The Commandos just killed her in cold blood in front of her house and went away. The people of Telangana rose against such atrocities of the Punjab Commandos and finally the government had to withdraw them. But meanwhile due to their atrocities people like Rajavva had lost their lives and many more were tortured. Establishing a society where poor people like Rajavva can live in peace is the true tribute we can pay to her.

Comrade Sarada

Martyrdom : .....

Com. Sarada was born in Manikyapur village of Karimnagar district in a poor family. She studied till 10th standard. She was attracted towards the revolutionary politics in the village and understood that women's liberation is possible only through armed revolution. Within a short period she got recruited into the squad and fulfilled her duties as a squad member. She mingled well with her squad comrades.

Comrade Rukmini Bai

Martyrdom : .....

Inspired with the newly emerging Balaghat movement Rukmini broke the traditional bonds and opposed the authority of the tribal elders. She propagated revolutionary politics in many villages. In that course, she had to face the harassment of lumpens. She developed the women's movement by controlling such elements. Understanding that New Democratic Revolution was the only way for the liberation of woman, Rukmini Bai joined the peasant guerrilla squad with determination to contribute for revolution. She was popular as Rukmini Bai in the squad. She showed great interest in learning to read and write, to do military exercises and learn politics during the ten days of her squad life. Weapon became a part of her body. One day enemy encircled them and started firing but she was not perplexed by the cannonade of bullets burst by the enemy. At first, leaving her gun in a hurry, she took cover. But later she tried to retrieve her gun but lost her precious life in that effort!

Comrade Madkam Subbakka (Phulwati)

Martyrdom : 03-03-1995

Phulwati was born in a poor tribal family of Tetemadugu (Kistaram Range) village of Konta Tehsil in South Bastar. She was inspired by the movement going on against evil headmen, landlords, contractors and officers of forest department in those years. They were led by the Dandkaranya Adivasi Kisan Mazdoor Sangh (DAKMS). Inspired by the struggling women mobilizing under the flag of Krantikari Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan (KAMS), Phulwati became a member of the organization in October, 1991. Later, she was elected to the Executive Committee (EC) of the organization. Strengthening the women's organization in the village, Phulwati organised women by launching struggles on the problems of tribal women. Especially she mobilized tribal women against child-marriages, on the issue of men forcibly abducting women and marrying them and against male domination. She even struggled against the headmen of the village.

Working in co-operation with DAKMS, she played a prominent role in the mass struggles against plundering by money-lenders in the weekly markets. Whenever the guerrilla squad visited the village, Phulwati would be certainly present in the meetings. Besides she used to gather other girls and women for the meetings. She participated actively in learning and teaching revolutionary songs, in gaining military knowledge and in doing military exercises. She considered the responsibility of defending the squad as her first priority and more important than her life. Phulwati was always ahead in arranging food and water for the squad members and in defending the squad like the pupil of her eye. She participated actively in seizing the land of landlords and in distributing it to the poor landless farmers. Working in KAMS, she understood that there was no other way for the liberation of women other than revolution; that until social ownership on the means of production is won, the exploitative system would not end; and that equal relations between man and woman would not be established. With this understanding Bhimakka joined the guerrilla squad in August 1992 as a professional revolutionary (PR). From then on, she worked for five months in the Konta squad with the name Subbakka. Later when she was transferred to another squad keeping in view the needs of the division, she accepted the decision of the party heartily. In spite of being in a new area and having to learn a new language,

with her strong will power and revolutionary devotion she got a good hold on the area by learning the language in a short time. She mingled with the people as Phulwathi. In the two and a half years of her revolutionary life, she worked very actively for more than one year in Basagudem squad and for one year in Keskal squad. She was very affectionate towards other members of the squad. She served as an ideal to the other members. Although she was illiterate while living in the village, she became literate in Hindi. As a revolutionary worker, she along with the squad participated actively in the struggles against headmen, landlords and moneylenders in weekly markets, various types of contractors and Kuvvemari Bauxite mines. She was always in the forefront in punishing police informers and enemies of the people. While working in the Keskal squad, she fought courageously with the police in two encounters within two months. She was always ahead in maintaining the disciplinary rules of the squad. In course of her revolutionary life, she married one of the comrades in the squad. She also proved with her practice that no contradiction need exist between married life and guerrilla life. On March 3rd, 1995, the soldiers of SAF, after getting information from an informer, laid a trap in a planned manner at a place, which was at a distance of 100 yards from the Narayanpur - Benur Road and attacked the squad cruelly. Resisting the attack, the guerrilla squad retreated. But Phulwati who was already ill, got martyred in that attack. Later people took her body, paid homage with revolutionary traditions and cremated her body.

Comrade Ruppi

Martyrdom : 06-03-1995

Com. Ruppi (19) was a soldier who defied repression and marched in the path of struggle. Ruppi was born in Jarrigondi village of Gudem mandal of Visakha district (East Division). She belonged to the Kuvi tribe. Jarrigondi was an active centre for the revolutionary movement. So it faced lot of repression. Led by DSP Potha Reddy the police burnt down the village two times. They looted it. But still the village stood firmly with the movement.

As the heir of such glorious village Ruppi got recruited into the squad in 1986 amidst severe repression. She came into the squad opposing the patriarchal oppression in the Kuvi tribe. She was one of the first women comrades to be recruited in the East Division. At first she worked in Tandava squad and later in Ellavaram squad. She worked in Nagulakonda Squad later. She participated in many land struggles and labour wages struggles in Ellavaram and Nagulakonda areas. She worked day and night during the struggle for fair prices for agricultural produce in 1990-91. Though the police chased her brother away from the village after torturing him, to put pressure on her to surrender, she did not waver. She severely opposed forceful marriages, child marriages and opressive traditions. She built up women's organizations and increased their consciousness. She mobilized women into struggles. In the memorial meeting held at Addatheegela in 1990, she mobilized thousands of people along with her squad.

Wherever she worked she had close relations with the people. She spent more time with the people. She cared for them and asked about their problems. She participated actively in the struggles for bamboo rates and fair rate for rajma, land struggles and in the struggles against exploitation of forest officials. In that process she withstood the severe repression in Nagulakonda area courageously.

She was a responsible comrade in the squad too. She was a straight

forward person. She criticized comrades without any liberalism. She mingled well with comrades who had crtiticized her too. She had married Com. Podugu Mangaraju who was Ellavaram deputy commander. He was martyred in an encounter in 1988. She overcame this grief and continued firmly. In her whole revolutionary life we can see this quality of withstanding any kind of adversities and repression.

She was martyred in the encounter at Janamuru in 1995. The constable Chittibabu who was kidnapped during the Anakapalli raid revealed that Ruppi was caught with injuries and that they had raped her and killed her. This inhuman beast died in the hands of the people. Overthrowing this cruel, patriarchal society which doesn't even spare injured, blood soaked women comrades and rapes them is the real homage we can pay to Com. Ruppi.

Comrade Gajjela Suguna

Martyrdom : 19-04-1995

Comrade Suguna was born in a dalit family in Vangara village of Karimnagar which was one of the strongest anti-feudal movement villages. After marriage she stayed at Gatla Damera village. Her husband was working actively in the Sangam. Sangam and party activities were going on actively in the village. These facts inspired Suguna too to work for the people.

She joined the Women's organization in 1984 and mobilized women into anti-feudal struggles. They fought against begar and for increase in wage rates. She joined the party as a full timer in 1986. She prepared herself to leave all her kith and kin and joined the underground work in Warangal town. She gave shelter to the 'action teams' which were formed to annihilate the enemies of the people. Then she was transferred to the armed squads and she worked in the Annasagar squad. She became popular within a short period as Lakshmakka. She was successful in building a strong women's movement in the area by increasing the political consciousness of the women.

She mobilized women into anti-arrack struggles, struggles for land and wage increases etc. She mobilized women from about 12 villages (Dammanapet, Unikicherla, Damera, Veleru, Sanigaram, Annasagaram, Peesara, Krishnajigudem, Sodashapalli etc) in the anti-arrack struggles and they took huge rallies with this demand. Women began participating in people's courts and participated in struggles for freedom and self-respect. The police established camps in support of the land lords who wanted to crush the struggles. She moved amidst these camps secretely and mobilized women into struggles against the brutal atrocities perpetrated by the police. She played a good role in mobilizing people into other peasant problems like fair prices for agricultural produce, decreasing the rates of fertilizers, for current etc. The peasants conducted rallies and dharnas and did militant struggles with these demands with the guidance given by comrades like Lakshmakka.

She learnt to read and write in the party and tried to increase her consciousness by reading party literature. As part of the severe repression on the party, there were many encounters with the police and Suguna escaped safely along with her fellow guerillas by fighting heroically with

the enemy. People served like water to the fish. She was in the forefront in destroying the government propety in protest activities, annihilation of land lords and police informers.

She was co-opted into a three member cell in 1991. She was appointed as the deputy commander in March 1993. She fulfilled her duties as an ACM well by winning the confidence of the guerillas and the people and took part actively in making crucial decisions about the area. She attended the Warangal district plenum in 1991 and discussed about the problems the movement faced and about the problems of women. She attended the conference of Warangal district conference as a delegate in December 1994. There she was elected as a delegate to the state level conference.

In February 1995, she was transferred to Palakurthy area and worked as a deputy commander. She won the confidence of the people and the guerillas in the two months time she worked there before her martyrdom.

The squad had gone to Ainavolu village as part of building the movement in Vardhannapet mandal. On April 19, 1995, the squad was talking to the peasantry about their problems and at that time, a pin bomb from the hands of Naganna fell down on a rock and it blasted. In that blast, the grenade pieces hit Lakshmakka in the heart and she fell down and died on the spot.

In her decade long revolutionary career, Lakshmakka had established many ideals for us to emulate. Let us pledge to carry them forward.

Comrade Jilani Begum (Lalitha)

Martyrdom : 12-12-1995

On the night of December 12, 1995, the Srirampur organizer Com. Krishnamurthy was arrested along with Com. Jilani Begum in Srirampur. They were tortured the whole night and were killed in a fake encounter near Sundilla village near Godavarikhani on 13th morming.

Com. Jilani was living with her family in Mandamarri and helped the party in many ways between 1977 and 1981. She fought against religious chauvinism and superstitions and followed revolutionary traditions. She wanted to work in the party as a full timer like her husband and became one in 1984. After two years, the party asked her to operate from home as it suited the party needs and she did so till 1992. Again heeding the call of the party, she went underground from the beginning of 1992 and worked in the technical mechanism of the party. She was transferred to Srirampur by the party on tech work and while she was residing there, she was caught along with Com. Krishnamurthy and laid down her life. She did not reveal any secret of the party. She loved Krishnamurthy like a son and we can only imagine what she went through when he was being tortured in front of her and later killed. A novel “Nettuti Dhara” (Stream of Blood) was written on the life of Jilani by Ramadevi in Telugu and it depicted the agony of the last moments of both of their lives. It gives a fair idea about the comrade that Jilani was and her persona.

Jilani Begum was the first woman martyr of the Singareni movement. She was from the working class and the Muslim community. All these make her a unique revolutionary along with her personality which was a very affectionate one.

Comrade Poladasari Parvathi

Martyrdom : 03-02-1996

Com. Parvathi (Rama) was born in Begumpet village in Kamanpur mandal, Karimnagar district in a poor family. She was inspired by the struggles against women's oppression and feudalism in her village and nearby villages and came into contact with the party in 1993. They formed the women's organization in their village and fought on women's issues. She realized that armed struggle is the only path for liberation and joined the squad in October 1995. As a squad member she fulfilled her responsibilities well and learnt to read and write with great interest.

By 1996, the people of North Telangana had successfully occupied thousands of acres of lands of the land lords and were forming gram rajya committees which were revolutionary people's councils working as people's power organs. On the night of January 2, 1996 at 11 p.m., the people and the squad were conducting a people's court. The police surrounded them and in a gruesome manner reminding one of the Jallianwalahbag massacre, they killed about 9 persons of whom five were villagers. Rama was injured in this attack and was almost unconscious when she was caught by the police and was killed on 3-2-1996. People took her body in a rally in Begumpet village and paid red homage to her and pledged to carry forward her aims.

Dhirimurum Martyrs

Martyrdom : 23-03-1996

On 22nd March, 1996, the Madhya Pradesh police surrounded a squad near Dhiri Murum in Balaghat from all sides and started cannonading them with machine guns. Comrades Santhosh, Jyothi, Prameela and Rama laid down their lives fighting fiercely with the enemy.

Comrade Jyothi (Bayya Veladi)

Till 1986, Bayya was one of the members of the Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan of Gadchiroli Division. By 1991, when the 'Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan' assumed the shape of 'Kranthikari Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan' spread all over DK, Bayya had already achieved five years of experience in the guerrilla squad and was known as Jyothi. By the time of her martyrdom in the Dhiri-Murum encounter on March 23rd, 1996, she had gained vast experience in people's war in a decade's time. She progressed in her guerrilla life from a peasant guerrilla squad to the military squad, and then to the platoon. She was one of the women members of the first platoon built up in Dandkaranya. The life of Jyothi was so much intertwined with revolutionary movement of Gadchiroli Division that it cannot be separated.

Thirty years ago, Bayya Veladi was born in Bangarampet village under Kamlapur range, Aheri Tehsil of District Gadchiroli. She was the only daughter of her family. Before getting acquainted with the revolutionary movement, she bore everything like any other tribal girl till the age of 16. From childhood, she used to participate in the agricultural labour. She

bore silently the outrage and atrocities of the officers while working as a labourer in the forest department and while cutting bamboo for the paper mill. She spent her childhood and youth under clan authority. From 1982 itself, the life of the villagers of Bangarampet got linked to the Revolutionary movement. The credit for devoting its dear children to the revolutionary movement goes to this village. Comrade Torrem Shankar (cousin brother of Jyothi) was the first martyr of this village who was killed by the police in a fake encounter. Comrade Sedmek Sita, the first woman martyr was a cousin of Jyothi. Sita was overjoyed on seeing Jyothi in the squad. Encouraging her decision, she asked her to continue the struggle till her last breath. Jyothi sacrificed her life in the path of Sita and fulfilled her hopes. The disruption of the Kamlapur conference by the police in February 1984 gave a new turn to the history of Gadchiroli district. The Adivasi Kisan Mazdoor Sanghatan formed and working only in Gadchiroli District till then, became a familiar word to the outer world with this meeting. It also left a deep impression in Kamlapur and its nearby ranges. Bayya participated with zeal in the preparations of the conference and publicity campaign. The tribals are distressed by oppression, outrage and exploitation since generations. Besides this, women were facing exploitation under traditional customs too. 'The Adivasi Mahila Sangatan' built up in the year 1986 under these circumstances is a proof that the rising young generation is not at all ready to bear the repression of clan authority. Bangarmpet became the coordination centre for the women's organization. Due to the initiation of Bayya and other members of the women's organization, the meetings of village and range organizations were successfully held. From then on, with the development of the Adivasi Mahila Sangatan into Krantikari Adivasi Mahila Sangathan, the development women took place side by side.

In Bangarampet the village tribal headmen opposed the building up of Mahila Saghatan. After opposing them in all the ways she can, Bayya was eager to teach them a lesson with the help of the of the squad members. Jyothi, who was determined to defeat patriarchy, was very happy to see the squad giving warning to the Panchs of the Panchayat. In this process, by February 1987 she joined the guerrilla squad as a PR. She was the first woman of the village to hold the gun. Jyothi participated in the preparations for the first conference of DK Party in 1987 as a member of the protection squad. She participated in the military training camp held in August 1987. In spite of the squad and party life being new to her,

without any hesitation she mingled with all in a friendly manner. She married a fellow guerrilla in 1988 and till her death she always put work above married life. Understanding that in the life of a revolutionary guerrilla, extra difficulties would occur due to children she opted not to have children. Jyothi was a very lively guerrilla. She used to participate enthusiastically in singing and dancing. When she used to sing in her melodious voice, the song written in the memory of martyr Comrade Puli Anjanna, it appeared as if she was really waiting for Anjanna's return from the East. Anjanna was with the Ahiri squad on the day when Jyothi joined the squad. To day the martyrdom of both continues to inspire millions. Jyothi used to participate passionately in cultural programmes. She liked the group dance more. On the occasion of 'All India Special Conference' of the Party in 1995, participating in the group dance for many revolutionary songs, she filled the venue of Charu Mazumdar Commune with enthusiasm. Learning to read and write in the party, gradually she became capable of reading magazines like Kranthi, Prabhat and Jung in her squad life. Writing poems with the name of 'Jyothi' she joined the list of writers of DK. She proved that the slogan 'everyone is a writer' is true.

In January 1996 on the occasion of Gadchiroli Plenum she participated in the quiz competition and was selected the 'best contributor' for collecting news. A Central Committee member presented a novel to her in appreciation of this work. The military life of Jyothi serves as a model for every guerrilla. Due to the increasing importance of military tasks in DK movement, need for separate military squads arose. Hence she was selected the member of the first military squad formed in Gadchiroli division. In 1991, while participating in the military training camp, she fractured her leg in the long jump. This pain remained with her till end. Her foot used to swell while walking continuously for miles or while walking in the mountainous regions. Without caring for the physical inconvenience, she used to fulfill the duties of a squad member with military discipline. She enhanced her military understanding while participating as a student in the military training camp organised in the year 1993-94. Jyothi participated in all the military activities of the platoon and Ahiri squad and fulfilled all her responsibilities commendably. With the aim of destroying the Gadchiroli movement, the Maharashtra government started many repressive measures under the Special Action Plan. After 1992, the government started ruling at gun point by increasing repressive measures like sexual atrocities on women, fake encounter killings, massacres, forcing mass

organization members to resign etc. The pressure on the families of local comrades who joined the squads was increased to get their sons and daughters to surrender. Even under the cruel repression, Jyothi remained determined in her principles. For a long time, she was in the Ahiri squad and faced enemy repression. Participating in actions like Dubbagudem ambush, Jyothi fought the enemy onslaught.

There was one more special quality to learn from Jyothi - not to tolerate male domination. She used to oppose openly whenever women were treated inferior in the squads. She used to vehemently oppose the person -whether he is a leader or a member - if he insulted women. It is not an exaggeration to say that the reason behind the increasing respect for women from men in the squads today is due to the struggles waged by comrades like Jyothi. Jyothi was one of those comrades who took initiative in correcting her comrades and opposed patriarchal attitudes. Jyothi was an example for all the women in accepting progressive and new thoughts. Wherever an argument began on 'guerrilla woman's long hair', she always stood in favour of cutting off the long hair. She strongly opposed the Hindu traditions, which entangled women in traditional bonds in the form of ornaments like bangles, bindi, chain etc. After the year 1994 Jyothi stopped wearing all these things. Every year on the occasion of International Women's Day - 8th March, she always engaged herself ardently in the programmes. At different occasions she used to express her thoughts without any hesitation standing on the stage near the flag. In this way, establishing ideals in every work she did, Jyothi was elected a member of Squad Area Committee on 9th Feb 1996. According to the needs of revolutionary movement Jyothi left Gadchiroli and went to Bhandara. But within a month she got martyred while fighting courageously in an encounter with the enemy. Although Jyothi has physically departed, her ideal, determination and aim will always inspire us. We will continue this fight till last breath while walking in the footsteps of martyrs. We will complete their incomplete aim. Fulfilling her aim will be a true homage to this heroic fighter.

Comrade Prameela (Birju Bai)

Birju Bai, born in a poor tribal family of Rasimetta village under Laanji Tehsil of Balaghat district started her revolutionary life from May 1994. Prameela started moving towards revolutionary politics due to her hatred towards life shackled in the traditions of clan authority and conservative

bonds acting upon the women of tribal society. She got exalted on meeting the guerrilla squad whenever it came to her village. She always gave full cooperation to the squad. She had boundless love for martyr comrade Azad (Kosraju Gandhi). Four comrades including

Azad got martyred while fighting courageously with the enemy in an encounter near Mandwa on May 1994. Prameela selected NDR politics as the objective of her life after hearing this news and armed herself. She joined the class struggle due to her wrath towards the murderous government, which killed four comrades including her dear leader. Then, she started her party life with Malajkhand squad. She strictly followed the military discipline in her revolutionary life of two years. She proved her ability by completing with determination every responsibility given to her. When she left her area Paraswada and went to Darekassa as per the decision of the party a revolutionary determination shone on her face. She used to participate in the organizational and military activities of squad with great sincerity and devotion. She never had any hesitation in fulfilling the responsibilities as a squad member. On 22nd March, she stood firmly along with her comrades fighting courageously against the enemy attack near Dhiri Murum. The enemy surrounded from all sides and started cannonading with machine guns. But she did not become panicstricken and sacrificed her life along with Santhosh, Jyothi and Rama, fighting fearlessly with the enemy. Let us carry forward the struggle for fulfilling the dreams of our beloved martyrs of Balaghat movement.

Comrade Rama (Bichchakka Madavi)

The name of Cheenda Gaon has been linked permanently with the history of guerilla squad of People's War, which entered into Maharashtra for survey in the month of July-August 1980. From 1981, this small village of 20 houses in Ahiri Tehsil under Jimmalagatta Range is continuously siding with the revolutionaries till now. Rama was born 22 years ago in the Madia community of this village residing on the banks of Indravati River on the borders of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Her parents named her Bichchakka. The life of Rama was intertwined with the development of revolutionary movement of this region. From childhood she had boundless love for the squad. Whenever the squad arrived in the village, she used to jump with joy. She started working in the women's organization at a very young age as a teenager. She fulfilled every responsibility given to her by the party with full dedication. Born in a poor farmer family, Rama used to work as a labourer in forest department works,

road construction works etc even while doing agricultural labour. She opposed the exploitation and tyranny faced by the labourers. She tried to awaken the labourers working with her by instilling self-confidence in them. Madia women faced additional suppression due to the prevalent conservative traditions - from tattooing to forcibly removing the blouse. She undertook the challenging task of ending these traditions. With the determination to change the social system, she walked ahead in the path of struggle.

Rama even while contributing actively in the village organization and KAMS Range Committee was eager to join in the squad as soon as possible. Whenever she met the squad, she never forgot to demand for her recruitment into the squad. At last her wishes came true in 1990.

Rama was now an armed guerrilla. She started a new life leaving behind the traditional life. Rama, who wished to liberate women facing poverty insult and discrimination at every step, accepted the responsibilities of a squad member delightfully. She went from Ahiri to Chamurshi Area without any hesitation, where she started her guerilla life. In Chamurshi area, she fulfilled her responsibilities with discipline till October 1995. Chamarshi was a new area for the guerrilla squad and moreover informers were a serious problem there. She didn't lose heart seeing these adverse conditions. She stood steadfast along with her comrades in all the activities of the squad, from punishing informers to attacking the police. She won the confidence of her comrades and people. In the encounters with the police in Jadgaon, Kuttekanar and Rengawai villages, she resisted the enemy fiercely along with other squad members. Rama participated in the opportunity ambush laid by the squad for restricting the movements of the enemy. She skillfully fulfilled all the responsibilities of a squad member including the duties of sentry. She used to compete to be equal with her male comrades in every work. Guerrilla life is indeed a political school. She got basic education along with revolutionary politics. She got party-membership in the year 1991. She worked hard to understand squad life and the life of the people. Rama chose squad commander Santhosh as her life partner. This newly married couple led a successful married life till two years observing all the ideals of the squad life. Both of them decided not to have children. They accepted revolution as their life. They loved the people. In this way both of them became memorable leaders in the hearts of people. Santhosh (Durganna) got martyred in an encounter in July 1993. She did not lose heart even after losing her life-partner. She continued her guerrilla life with the great aim of fulfilling the dreams of

martyrs.

In Gadchiroli division, a series of fake encounters began after the death of Santhosh in the brutal onslaught of the state. At least 70 comrades were killed brutally by the police in the Division from July 1993 to August 1994. Under a special campaign, intense combing operations were carried on, particularly in Etapalli squad area. Hundreds of policemen participated in this combing operation. Rama set an example by fulfilling the responsibilities of a guerrilla even under such severe repression. Rama became the member of Etapalli squad, which was merged with Chamurshi guerrilla squad due to repression. Even while continuing as a member of Etapalli squad, Rama took the responsibility of organising Chamurshi area, as she was one of the senior party workers who had profound relations with the area. Fulfilling this responsibility till 1995, Rama went to Balaghat Division on the decision of Party. Rama grew up in revolutionary politics while gaining experience in the village organization by opposing conservative traditions. She never failed to oppose male domination and patriarchal tendencies whenever they appeared in the squad.

Rama sacrificed her life fighting the exploitative system for achieving the liberation of women in the path of NDR. She was martyred in the Dhiri Murum encounter. True homage to Rama would be to continue the legacy of her struggle.

Comrade Ramanakka (Latha)

Martyrdom : March 1996

Com. Ramana was born in Chainpaka village in Chityal mandal, Warangal district in a poor family. She had three elder brothers and was doted upon. Since her childhood she used to meet the squad with her brother and learnt to sing revolutionary songs. She studied till 7th standard in her village and joined the Bal Sangam. She used to bring food and water for the squad. She was very affectionate with the guerillas even as a child and showed great interest in learning politics. In 1990, her brother Saranna was martyred in a fake encounter and with his inspiration she decided to dedicate her life too for the people.

She developed actively as a member of the Chityal VMS and mobilized women into anti-arrack struggles. She mobilized people against the atrocities and exploitation of the land lords and attacked their homes. She distributed their property to the people under the leadership of the Sangam.

The movement was developing in leaps and bounds in the Chityal area and so the police raided Latha's home and tortured her parents and her brother seriously. Her brother Linganna could not bear all this and had committed suicide. This only served to increase class hatred in her.

She became the women's team in-charge and led the women in the area. She read party literature with lot of interest and discussed politics with her comrades. To develop herself militarily, she used to do PT and drill regularly. As the repression increased, she joined the Chityal squad in 1993. She was in the forefront in all peopls's struggles and in protest programmes. She participated in the blasting of Challagarige state bank, Sundaramma's house in Akinepalli, land lords' house in Dwarakapet and in the mine blast at Bhoopalpalli.

Then she became the commander of the LGS. Increasing her political

consciousness, she developed to the level of taking political classes for women and Sangam members.

She was frank and straight forward in criticizing patriarchy in the squad. She used to tell the women comrades to overcome their backwardness and develop theri individuality.

Latha worked hard to develop the movement in Chityal area. She mobilized peasantry on a vast scale on their problems. She gave military training to the young men and women who were joining the Sangams. She put efforts to develop the student movement too by mobilizing the students on their problems.

Latha resisted the attacks on the squad by the enemy who was bent on annihilating the squad. In 1996 March, the squad had taken shelter near Morancha stream for its committee meeting. The police were combing like mad dogs all the water points in the borders of Karimnagar and Warangal districts after the raid and blasting of Pothkapalli police station. Latha had gone to answer nature's call and she observed the police batch. She alerted the squad by shouting like a deer. Even as she was taking cover to fire, the police opened rapid fire on her and she died there.

Though she knew that she would become a targer if she gave signal, she alerted her fellow comrades and saved their lives.

It is a great loss to the whole party to have lost such a brave guerilla and a raising woman leader who was efficient in the political, organizational and military fields equally. She was young, dynamic and had great commitment towards her people and comrades - qualities of which great leaders are made of. Let us pledge to carry forward her lofty aim.

Guttapalli Martyr

Comrade Vijayakka (Nirmala, Lakshmi)

Martyrdom : 10-4-1996

Comrade Vijaya was born in a middle class family in Kovaramguttapalle of Simhadripuram mandal in Kadapa district. She was married to a doctor and went to live with him in Maharashtra but after a few years their relation broke. So Vijaya came back to Andhra Pradesh and began living in her relatives' home in Tirupati. She got party contacts in that period and imbibed revolutionary politics. Gradually she decided to work as a full time party activist. She had two children. She left them and joined the party.

Vijaya married Comrade Kishtappa in 1983 and worked as a secret den keeper for the party till her death. For 13 long years she served hundreds of comrades as a den keeper. Especially she took care of the leadership comrades in the most vigilant manner. She fulfilled every duty assigned to her in this field in the most diligent manner and won the complete confidence of the higher leadership. She patiently looked after scores of comrades who came for treatment from the guerilla zones for weeks and months together. She argued that women should not be confined to dens and that they should be given creative works.

In the period of internal crisis in the party in 1991, she worked in the squads and helped in the rebuilding of the party in Kadapa district. Many comrades from that region (Rayalaseema) had left the party during the crisis or sided with the opportunists but she stood steadfast with the party. With her example helped in defeating the opportunists who tried to divide the party in that period. She worked in the Kalangi, Swarnamukhi squad areas in the Srikalahasti area during 1991 internal crisis period and walked for miles competing with the younger members and organizing the women in the anti-arrack struggle which raged all over AP in that period. She participated in all the actions done for reduction of rates of arrack in the KVB Puram mandal.

Vijaya was the beloved elder sister to many comrades and whenever any of the comrades she was acquainted with got martyred, Vijaya used to cry her heart out. Such was the deep bond she developed with all of them.

Later she again took up the responsibility of maintaining secret dens.

In her last days she worked as a worker in the factory even at that age and directly came to know about the exploitation of the workers. She joined the factory to maintain cover and also to earn some money so that the economic burden of the party would get reduced. Though she got only ten to fifteen rupees per day the spirit with which she went to do that back breaking work is something to be emulated by all the young comrades. Such were the values practiced and left to us by exemplary communists like Vijayakka.

Even when she was caught she did not reveal any party secrets though she was tortured. The police hacked her arm and there were other tell-tale signs of torture on her body. Comrade Vijaya was caught along with Com. Kistappa, a state committee member and her husband, Com. Bhupati, a regional committee member and brother of Kistappa and Sudhakar, Kistappa's courier and all four of them were killed in cold blood near Guttapalli in Kadapa district in a fake encounter on 10-04-1996.

Vijaya's hard working nature and her affectionate greetings with a smile on her face could never be forgotten. It is by imbibing communist values from comrades like her that the younger generations could steel themselves in the path of revolution going through all kinds of difficulties. Let us bow our head humbly before this selfless communist.

Comrade Vinoda (Swaroopa/Aruna)

Martyrdom : 22-04-1996

On 22nd April 1996, Swaroopa got martyred in an encounter near Chindari village in Khairagarh Tehsil of Rajnandgaon district under Balaghat division. She was linked with the party and revolutionary movement for about 15 years. The untimely death of Swaroopa, a senior member and dedicated worker of the party is a heavy loss to the movement. Swaroopa was born in a poor dalit Christian family in Peddammagadda village near Hanamkonda of Warangal district in Andhra Pradesh. Her parents named her 'Vinoda'. She was the last child of her parents. She had four brothers and sisters. Her parents performed her marriage after passing 10th standard. She was harassed by her in-laws. Comrade Ramana was her maternal uncle. Ramana got martyred in an attack by landlords and hooligans of Peesara. With the help of Ramana she opposed the atrocities of her in-laws. In those days comrades like Ailayya and Haribhushan (who are not alive today) used to come to her house. She was politically influenced and inspired by these comrades and helped the party from 1980 to 1983 in many ways. In 1983, she joined the party as a full time worker. She played an active role in organising women and slum-dwellers on local problems in Warangal city. In 1984, Vinoda entered the DK area. She was the first female guerrilla in the East Division. She was known as 'Aruna' in Sabari guerrilla squad. In the beginning, party had to face the attacks of Paila Vasu group in East Division. Opposing the attacks of this group, she played an active role as a member of Sabari squad in propagating party politics among the masses. In 1986, participating in the Daragadda ambush, which is the first successful ambush in the history of Party, she killed one policeman. She participated in the abduction of seven IAS officers near Gurtedu in 1987 for compelling the government to release seven arrested comrades.

In 1987, an unfortunate incident took place. Swaroopa slipped while walking in the dark and her spleen got injured. Her health started deteriorating day-by-day due to filling of puss in the spleen and she had unbearable pain in the stomach. She worked in the squads in this condition for one year. In 1989 doctors did an operation after which she lost her resistance power. She began falling ill often. By the end of 1989 after taking party's permission, she went to the plains to take rest. After taking rest for some days she worked with the technical department from September 1990 to 1996. She learned the work of manufacturing and repairing guns and hand grenades with enthusiasm and interest. She completed every responsibility given by the Party honestly. She was promoted to the AC. The enemy shot her dead from close in the Chindari firing. Swaroopa worked tirelessly for the liberation of the masses till her last breath. She was not only a good comrade, but also a good writer. She praised the sacrifices of martyrs in most of her poems written under the pen name 'Jwala'. She sacrificed her life while trying to achieve the lofty aim of martyrs!

Comrade Kumari (JNM)

Martyrdom : 1996

Comrade Kumari.....

Comrade Pothanapalli Rukmini (Aruna)

Martyrdom : 29-05-1996

Com. Rukmini (26) was born in a lower middle class family in Boddapadu (Srikakulam division). She had three younger brothers. Since she was the eldest daughter, she had a key role in maintaining the family.

In the glorious Srikakulam movement 11 comrades from Boddapadu were martyred. To this day, the influence of the movement on the village is strong. After the setback of that movement too, this village remained the centre for many ML groups. Rightist parties like Janashakthi, Liberation, Prajapandha and leftist groups like Lin Piao group are present in the village. The influence of Liberation is more. Rukmini's family was sympathetic to the Lin Piao group which boycotted polls. Especially her father participated in party activities. Their house was a good shelter for the party activists.

People's War party activities started in Uddanam area in 1983. Gradually the struggles created an impact on the whole area and on Boddapadu as part of it. The land lords could not tolerate this and murdered party organizer Salina Bhoga Rao of Bahadapalli in Uddanam. This infuriated the people and in 1989 the land lord of Bahadapalli was killed by the party. It created a good impact on the people.

During the 1990 legal period, many struggles broke out and people mobilized on a large scale. The impact of PW was vast. 20 year old Aruna also got attracted to the party. It is worth mentioning that she chose PW in spite of the domination of the rightist Liberation and the influence of leftist politics. Her close relative Chittekka was with Prajapandha at that time. Though she liked her, she did not choose to join that party.

Rukmini went to attend the Rytu Coolie Sangam conference in Warangal in 1990. She attended as a delegate to the RYL district

conference. With that inspiration she had participated in many propaganda campaigns. She became a full timer in July 1990 and joined the Uddanam squad. Though she had family responsibilities she chose to take up the responsibility of the society.

After some days she married the commander of the squad. Rukmini participated in all struggles of the Uddanam area. Uddanam area is known for cashewnuts. For the increase in rates and against the deception in weighing, struggles were conducted for about 5,6 years since 1989. Many struggles broke out with the demand that the government should buy the nuts and that it should establish markets. Every year markets were opened only after people' struggles.

There are hundreds of acres of cashew nut orchards in Ratti, Mendu areas. Every year auction is conducted by contractors. People struggled in 1968 too with the demand that they should be distributed to the people. Though many ML parties functioned in that area] none of them took up that demand again. PW took up the demand in 1983. Due to these struggles the auction was stopped every year. People had seized the harvest. Aruna's efforts were part of all these struggles.

In the coastal areas there was a big struggle in 1989 and 1990 to distribute the orchards of landlords to the people. People occupied the orchards on a big scale. People attacked the 100 acre coconut orchard of Punjab Singh many times and had seized the harvest. Aruna mobilized people in all these struggles. She played an active role in building Bhoga Rao's martyr column and in conducting the memorial meeting.

Anti-liquor struggles also broke out on a large scale. At first the demand was to reduce the rates and then for total boycott. As part of the struggle Sompeta godown was attacked and Aruna was part of it. A liquor shop in Pundi was also destroyed. Since it was located 30 kms away they had to travel and return the same day. But Aruna participated in this difficult action with spirit along with other guerillas.

Due to these vast struggles, the mass base of the party increased. The other ML parties started bad propaganda against PW. As a result, a conflict situation arose. The Chandra Pulla Reddy group resorted to armed attacks. The PW squad had attacked their squad in retaliation. Aruna participated in it.

Pinninti Madhava Rao was with Prajapandha party and the Congress and worked as an informer. The squad annihilated him. Aruna participated

in the action and in punishing some more informers. She was part of the team which seized a gun from a land lord. She participated in destroying the salt factory of Kanithi Viswanadham protesting the fake encounter of Comrades Puli Anjanna and Bhagya in 1992 and in burning of Haripuram railway station protesting the arrests of Nimmaluri Bhaskara Rao and others.

She participated in the division military camp in 1992. She became a party member in 1992 and became a member of Uddanam squad cell. In 1994 she became an ACM. She learnt to read and write in the party. She grasped politics well and tried to teach whatever she learnt to the people. Due to her development she became an ACM within a short period.

She was transferred to the East Division in 1995. Her whole life was linked with the Uddanam area but she did not hesitate to go to a new area. She changed her name to Sandhya in East Division. She took up the responsibilty of building women's organizations in Korukonda area and succeeded in building them on a vast scale. She mobilized people and especially women in the struggles for fair rates for rajma and for wage increases of coffee plantation workers. Since she mingled well with the people, it was never a problem for her to mobilize them.

Her health got severely damaged due to frequent malaria fever. She became weak. But she still worked actively. She liked songs and she inspired people with her songs. Seeing her interest, the party selected her to participate in the cultural workshop as a student. She improved her cultural skills there with good initiative. One day in the night the comrade in sentry duty did not see her and fired thinking that it was a bear. Bears were a great menace in that area. Aruna was hit fatally and fell down with a shriek. She suffered a lot and finally died at 7 a.m. on May 29, 1996. All her colleagues cried inconsolably to have lost such a valuable comrade in such a tragic manner.

She died in the Ranginaguda area which comes under the Odisha pocket of Korukonda area. The villagers and the guerillas bid her farewell with revolutionary honours. They pledged to carry forward the aims of the comrade who had left her parents and worked for them.

Comrade Niranjana

Martyrdom : 23-06-1996

On May 23, 1996, Com. Madireddy Sammireddy who was the leader of Singareni workers' movement and the Singareni Belt Committee was surrounded in a house in Naspur colony of Srirampur by hundreds of policemen. In one of the most heroic resistance instances in the revolutionary movement, Sammireddy had fought alone for hours together with them, killed two police and injured some and finally was martyred. It was the house of Com. Niranjana whose husband was a Singareni mines worker and a sympathizer of the movement. Niranjana and her husband Krishna Reddy have been giving shelter to the party since many years. Since the police came to know that Sammireddy was using that shelter, he stopped going there. But on that day when he went to another worker's house, the quarter was locked and so he went to this house. When 30 policemen surrounded the house at first he tried to escape with Niranjana but could not completely get out of their encirclement and went into another house. After a heroic resistance for 10 hours he was martyred in that house. Niranjana was arrested and tortured in one of the most brutal manners and killed. Niranjana was killed in this manner in order to terrorize the people, especially those who were willing to give shelter to the party comrades.

Comrade Todeti Kamala

Martyrdom : 19-10-1996

Com. Kamala was born in Machupet village of Mutharam mandal, Manthani area, Karimnagar district Since her family was sympathetic to the party, she developed affection for the party since she was a child. Since 1992, she began meeting the squad regularly and had attended political classes too. With the aspiration to work for the people as a full timer she joined the Manthani squad in 1994. Though she was sick at times, she tried to take part in all the collective jobs in the squad. She withstood all kinds of difficulties and repression and became a party member. Later she worked for some time in the Peddapalli squad. She learnt to read and write in the party. She learnt to sing and dance. She participated bravely in the Pothkapalli raid where the guerillas attacked the police station and seized weapons.

A Squad member named Rajaih and Kamala were sent on some party work and they travelled in civil clothes. The police caught them on way and tortured them severely for party secrets. Though they knew many party secrets including the whereabouts of the squad, they did not reveal anything upholding the highest communist ideals. The police killed both of them in cold blood on 19-10-1996 in the Odela hills and as always concocted an ‘encounter’ story.

Comrade Kanakalakshmi

Martyrdom : 20-10-1996

Com. Kanakalakshmi was born in Thanapur village of Kamanpur mandal of Peddapalli area, Karimnagar district She came into party contact in 1992. Since then she mobilized and led women in the struggles for wage increases of labourers and for stopping the sale of liquor. She led the struggles in the village and became a darling of the people. She attended the political classes two times and increased her political knowledge. She tried to mobolize people into class struggle continuosly. In that process, she was arrested and tortured. But she never turned back. Instead her commitment increased more and she decided to dedicate her life for the revolutionary movement. She joined the squad in September, 1996. She was transferred from Peddapalli squad to Jagityal squad. While on her way to Jagityal squad, she took shelter with another comrade in a house in Narsimhulapalle in Sarangapur mandal. The police were tipped off about them by an informer and they arrested both of them on October 20, 1996. They were tortured and killed brutally. Though the revolutionary life of Com. Kanakalakshmi was short, her ideals are forever. Her sacrifice will forever inspire the people.

Comrade Alisetti Amruthamma

Martyrdom : 22-10-1996

Com. Amruthamma (Neelamma) belonged to the Machupet village of Mutharam mandal in Manthani area of Karimnagar district She was recruited into the squad in 1990. She worked for some time in the Manthani squad as a member. Due to ill health she could not continue in that work and after eight months she opted out of the squad life. But as both she and her husband wanted to work for the revolution, they discussed with the party and the party suggested to them to settle in Vijayawada and help the party. Though they both lived a life outside the party, they both gave primary importance to the needs of the revolution. Amruthamma had good commitment towards the people and the revolution.

Com. Kamala was caught while going to Vijayawada on party work by the police and killed. Amruthamma and her husband Gattaiah were caught with the help of the address which Kamala had with her at that time. Both of them were arrested and after severe torture they were killed on October 22, 1996 and their bodies were thrown on the outskirts of Kalwacherla village in Kamanpur mandal of Karimnagar district As usual an 'encounter' story was concocted by the police.

Amruthamma had laid down her invaluable life for the revolution and the establishment of the New Democratic society is the best tribute we can pay to her as homage.

Comrade Garige Shobha (Rama)

Martyrdom : 04-11-1996

Com. Shobha belonged to the village Chelpur of Annasagar area and she was a member of the Sangam. She was caught and killed in a fake encounter on the night of November 4, 1996 near the village Hanumanthapur of Narmetta mandal.

Comrade Madavi Lakshmi

Martyrdom : 18-11-1996

Com. Madavi Lakshmi was born in Kuchalapur village of Bodh mandal in Adilabad district. She opposed the harassment of her husband and her in-laws. She wanted to get out of this forceful wedlock. Her parents had married her off against her will. Finally she took divorce. Her parents insisted that she should remarry. But she did not agree. She participated in many struggles against caste oppression and exploitation of land lords. She learnt of revolutionary party through her elder brother and decided to join the squad. The Party asked her to work for some more time in the Sangam in the village and she agreed. She mobilized women into the Sangam and helped the squad in doing works.

The guerillas had conducted a heroic raid on the Sirpur police station and the police were enraged. They began attacking villages like mad dogs. Lakshmi's brother Sekrao was the Bodh area president of Adivasi Rytu Coolie Sangam. On November 17, 1996, they raided the house of Sekrao and arrested him. Lakshmi tried to stop them but she was also taken along with him. The villagers tried to rescue them but they were threatened. Both the brother and sister were tortured severely. They raped her in front of him. Then they made them wear military dresses and killed both of them on 18-11-1996. Their bodies were thrown on the outskirts of their village and as usual an encounter story was concocted. Both of them did not reveal anything to the enemy in spite of the severe torture. The sacrifice of this brother and sister will not go vain. The oppressed people will definitely avenge their death.

Comrade Dornala Vasantha

Martyrdom : 29- 01-1997

Com. Vasantha was born in Sambhunipalle village in a poor family in Huzurabad area, Karimnagar district She came into party contact in 1987, inspired by the anti-feudal struggles in her village. She mobilized women in land struggles and in anti-patriarchal struggles in her village. In 1991, a constable tried to rape a woman when she was returning home after going to see a film with her husband. Women marched to the police station demanding punishment to the constable. Vasantha's role was central in this agitation. In 1991 she mobilized the peasants into a rally demanding fertilizers from the government. When the police tried to stop the rally, she held a rasta roko and foiled their attempts.

She became a full timer in 1995 and joined the Husnabad squad and fulfilled her responsibilities efficiently. She attended the classes for women comrades in 1996 and put forth her opinions about the development of the women's movement discussing deeply on the subject.

The enemy surrounded their squad on 29-01-1997 and started firing. Vasantha fought bravely and laid down her life for saving the lives of her comrades. Let us pay glorious homage to this brave soldier.

Lakshmapur Martyrs

Martyrdom : 21-03-1997

On 21-3-1997 the police surrounded a squad in Medak district with information and a fierce encounter ensued. Seven comrades including AP state committee member Comrade Damodar and three women comrades Syamala, Bharati and Laxmi were martyred in this incident.

Comrade Syamala

Syamala belonged to an upper caste family of Medak district. Her house was situated in the industrial area of Medak which is on the outskirts of Hyderabad. Workers used to live in rented houses in that area. Com. Trimurthulu was one such worker who had migrated to Hyderabad from East Godavari district in search of work. Trimurthulu had led struggles in his factory and had even slapped a SI who had tried to break the strike and harass the workers on behalf of the management. In that course he came into contact with the PW party and started getting interested in revolutionary politics. Syamala got acquainted with him and fell in love with him after seeing how sincere and committed he was towards the workers. She was an educated girl and her social and economic status was far better than his. He was a dalit and she knew her family would in no way allow her marriage to him. But she decided to defy her family and society for the sake of her love. When they tried to forcefully marry her off to somebody she ran away from her house and it was he who brought her again and handed her over to the family. Syamala did not know about his party connections till then. He decided to become a full timer for the party and told her about his decision and told her they may have to sacrifice their love. Syamala had heard about the party and its activities like all the people living in the movement areas and generally had a good impression. But more than that, she thought that if persons like him are deciding to work in the party, then it must definitely be one working for the sake of poor people. She told him she wanted to join the party and work too. Thus finally after educating her about the party and the risks, she was recruited into the party in 1996.

Syamala was not even 20 years by then. But she displayed a great deal of maturity in understanding the style of work in urban area, that too in a severe repression city like Hyderabad. She joined a private factory

as a worker according to the suggestion of the party. Almost all the PRs who were allotted to work among the working class in twin cities had joined private factories as workers for two reasons. One was to understand the conditions of the workers first hand and second was to get contacts among the workers as legal activities were not allowed by the government which had already unleashed unprecedented repression on the movement in the twin cities. Syamala was not used to such hard work but she enthusiastically tried to learn. She had a friendly nature and was excellent in making contacts. In that period, she had to look after a patient woman comrade too. Though she was new to any kind of work in the party, she undertook all the works given by the party with a smile on her face. Though she wished to meet Com. Trimurthulu more frequently, it was not possible due to his works. She overcame this 'difficulty' too. She learnt quickly and was sharp in grasping things. She studied the conditions of the women workers.

In February 1997, twin cities party Secretary Com. Rameshwar, committee member Com. Majjiga Raju and CO Sikandar were arrested by the police and killed in a fake encounter after brutally torturing them. The AP state committee had taken a decision to retreat the comrades in the twin cities for some days to the squads as the party network was under serious threat of the enemy. Com. Syamala and Trimurtulu were among the comrades who were retreated. Syamala was inspired to no end with the squad work and very enthusiastically began learning about guerilla life. She won the love of the squad members with her ringing laughter and overflowing enthusiasm. But within a few days after they met the squad in Medak, there was a fierce encounter with the police at Lakshmapur and seven comrades including state committee member Com. Damodar were martyred there. Com. Syamala was unarmed and she was one of the seven comrades who died in that encounter. She almost died in front of the eyes of her beloved.

Syamala had the potential to develop organizationally into a good organizer of the working class. Though the number of days she worked were few, the promise they held was greater. It is indeed a loss for the working class movement especially in organizing women workers. Her beloved Com. Trimurtulu continued to work in the party and was martyred in 2002 in an encounter in Nalgonda district.

Their love story was immortalized in a story titled 'A love story in revolution' written by a woman comrade. The smiling face of Syamala resembled a marigold in blossom and was unforgettable. Let us vow to create a society where true love could blossom without any shadow of repression.

Comrade Jadi Annapurna

Martyrdom : 08-05-1997

Com. Annapurna (Geetha) was born in a poor family in Mandamarri of Adilabad district Her family was in contact with the party and her brother was working as a full timer. So Purna came under the influence of revolutionary politics since she was a child. She studied till 5th standard and stopped her studies as they were too poor to send her to school. She used to read revolutionary literature with the little knowledge she had and tried to understand the society. Even after getting married, she longed to know about the party and its politics. Her husband was a drunkard and a good for nothing fellow. Many times she tried to put him on the correct path but what she got in reply was physical and mental abuse. She had to go without food too. She gave birth to a son. As the harassment of her husband increased with each passing day, she left him and came back to her parent's home. She told her brother in 1993 that she wanted to work in the party. With the help and encouragement of her brother, she came into contact with the party. She worked as an anganwadi teacher for some days. She stayed in Bellampalli town for one year on the suggestion of the party. In 1994, she changed her name to Geetha and joined the squad leaving her son and parents. She was much attached to her son but left him for a higher ideal. In 1996, she was given party membership. She worked as a doctor in the squad and was kind in looking after the sick persons, thus winning the confidence of guerillas. She never tolerated any discrimination on women. She insisted on the importance of building women's movement.

On 8-5-1997, SSF police attacked the Bodh squad at 5.30 a.m. and Geetha and the commander of the squad Com. Arjun were martyred in that attack. Geetha had the potential to come into leadership soon and it is a great loss to have lost such a comrade in the enemy onslaught.

Comrade Lakshmi

Martyrdom : 10-05-1997

Com. Lakshmi (Jyothi, Madhavi) was a member of the Kinnera squad of North Telangana Forest division. She was born in Bhongirpalli village of Bhopalpalli mandal, Warangal district She had one sister. Lakshmi studied till 5th standard. As they had economic difficulties, she had to work as a labourer. At the young age of 15, she was married against her will. She had faced harassment of her husband in her in-laws' home and it was difficult for her to bear the feudal traditions which her in-laws imposed on her. So she went back to her parents.

Lakshmi had progressive thinking from the beginning and she was attracted towards revolutionary ideology in 1992. She came into contact with the Mahadevpur squad. There was no women's organization in her village and she worked actively in the Rytu Coolie Sangam. Party told her to organize women and teach the villagers to read and write in the night school. She fulfilled these responsibilities sincerely. People were afraid to give shelter to the squad due to the severe repression unleashed by the enemy in 1992. So she used to sleep alone in the forest and went around the villages teaching revolutionary politics to the people. In 1993, responding enthusiastically to the call of the party she joined the Mahadevpur squad as a full time activist changing her name to Jyothi.

She never wasted her time in the squad and developed herself politically. She developed her understanding about poeple's problems and came closer to them. She married a fellow guerilla in the end of 1993. It was a love marriage. She upheld party ideals in her personal relations too. She became a party member in 1994. Though she had serious health problems she overcame them with political consciousness. She was bitten by a snake and had spots all over her body. Her leg had a wound. Still she

participated in the military camp in 1996. In May, 1996 she participated actively in the special political classes for women and insisted on the importance of building the women's organization. In September, 1996 she joined the Kinnera squad as Madhavi and within a short period, she became an apple of the eye of the people of that area.

When the squad was talking to the tendu leaf labourers in Venkatapuram village in Aswapur mandal, SSF police attacked them on May 10, 1997. Lakshmi was hit in the heart and died heroically fighting the enemy. Even in her last moments, she did not lose heart and told her fellow comrades about her condition and died.

The revolutionary movement had lost a good teacher and organizer.

Comrade Vijaya (Vasantha)

Martyrdom : 17-06-1997

Com. Vijaya was born in a rich peasant family in Uragonda village of Atmakuru mandal, Warangal district She studied till 10th standard in her village and she finished her intermediate in Warangal. Since her family was sympathetic to the movement from 1991, she was attracted towards the revolutionary politics naturally. But her family was against her working full time for the party. But she overcame all these hurdles created by her family and joined the movement in February 1995. Her family belonged to the Reddy caste and with that upper caste feeling they tried to take her back from the squad forcefully by beating her. But she opposed her family and came back again to join the Chityal squad in March 1995.

She used to compete with men in all kinds of tasks. She discussed that development programmes should be taken by the party in the areas and worked hard to implement them. She worked as the pilot of her squad and developed into an AC member. She married Com. Kondanna in December, 1996. She was straight forward in criticism and self-criticism.

This revolutionary couple was arrested when they went for medical care to a hospital and were returning. They were tortured cruelly but they did not reveal a single secret. The people of Bhoopalpalli were filled with grief when they heard of their sacrifice and had voluntarily observed bandh for one week. This just shows how much these revolutionaries had integrated with the people.

Their sacrifice will not go in vain. It will result in communism.

Comrade Parvati (Sandhya)

Martyrdom : 02-10-1997

It was October 2, 1997. So called apostle of ahimsa Gandhi's jayanti is observed on that day by the ruling classes. But the ruling classes drenched themselves with the blood of a brave revolutionary Com. Sandhya on that day. The Chandanagiri squad had taken shelter near Mukhalingapuram village in Srikakulam district. At that time land struggles erupted on a large scale in the area. The squad was gathering information about the lands in the villages from the villagers of a nearby village. By then, people had occupied the lands of Gane Madhava Rao of Kollivalasa and the bad gentry's lands in Narsingapalli under the leadership of the revolutionaries. Though they had bowed their heads in front of the fury of the people, the landlords were just waiting for an opportunity to wipe out the squad. So, as soon as they came to know about the whereabouts of the squad they informed the police. A police posse of 100 men began their hunt. The squad gave a letter to a militia comrade named Barikanna to be delivered at another village. He was caught by these police hounds within a distance of a few metres. Later three batches of police surrounded the squad. The sentry alerted the comrades and the squad began retreating, When the squad was passing through a plain area where there were no covers, the police fired on them. Com. Manganna died on the spot and Sandhya was injured and fell down. The commander of the squad who was Sandhya's partner too, gave cover fire to her and asked her to retreat. Though she was injured in the stomach severely, she went on firing heroically. She told her comrades that she cannot move and asked them to go away. But the commander could not leave her in such a position and went on firing trying to save her. But she was not in a position to move. It would be suicidal to go into the killing zone to bring her. And now the police also directed their firing towards him as he was in that cover for such a long time. Finally he had to move away leaving her.

Then the police caught Sandhya alive. They tortured the severely injured comrade further and killed her cruelly. Then they killed Barikanna too and threw his body in the encounter place.

The Srikakulam movement which was revived since 1983 had been continuing amidst severe repression. Five comrades were killed in four fake encounters by 1997 and one comrade died in torture. This was the

real encounter in the revived movement and Sandhya became the first woman martyr. This comrade who fought like a lioness till her last breath was just 18 years old.

Like Ankamma and Saraswathi, she also laid down her life at a young age. She was known as Parvathi at home. She was born in a poor adivasi family in Marripadu of Saravakota mandal of Srikakulam movement. By that time Com. Chittekka's squad belonging to Janashakthi was working in that area. She had great influence on young Sandhya. So she joined the squad at the young age of 15 and worked under the name of Padma. In the same year, Com. Chittekka and 13 more comrades opposed the opportunistic politics of Janasakthi and joined the people's war. Sandhya was one among them. State leader Kumar opposed their decision and kidnapped Chittekka and others. Sandhya boldly exposed this episode in the press meet.

She changed her name to Sandhya in PW and worked in the Chandanagiri squad under Chittekka's leadership. Many land struggles broke out under the leadership of their squad. 40 acres of Palasa landlord in Kandulagudem and Batupuram of Nandigam mandal were distributed to the people. 170 acres of land in Mukhalingapuram and Bendakayalapeta in Tekkali mandal were occupied by the Narsingapuram landlords. At first they did not surrender to the people. Instead they tried to attack the squad. So the squad beat them and then they surrendered. In Hirapuram ex-MLA of Tekkali Varada Saroja had 300 acres of land. People occupied 50 acres of mango harvest. Then the people were readied to occupy 300 acres of land. In Palasa mandal, another 150 acres of land was occupied. In just 1996 and 1997, 680 acres of land was occupied in Meliyaputti mandal. This shows the scale of land struggles. Sandhya's revolutionary life was inseparable from all these struggles. She had a natural ability to mingle with the people and so she played a main role in inspiring and mobilizing people.

Sandhya worked for 4, 5 months in the Uddanam squad. In that period, she mobilized women into anti-liquor struggles. One should learn from her how to befriend people. At first she was given the responsibility of organizing Bal Sangam. She befriended the children and taught them songs. She was a disciplined comrade. Due to her initiative and commitment, she soon became a party member.

She had a militant nature and displayed class hatred. When 300 people

attacked the Neelabadra landlord and annihilated him she displayed this quality by actively participating in it. The government establised a police picket to protect his sons. When the squad attacked this picket, Sandhya was in the B assault team and rushed forward with lightning speed. One police died and four were injured. Guerillas seized 5 rifles and 250 bullets. Though she was young and had little experience in squad she participated like a well trained guerilla in it. When they were retreating, the police attacked them while they were resting on a hill. Sandhya retreated safely along with others by heroically resisting the police.

She participated actively in the annihilation of Pedathamarapalli bad gentry Polaki Prakash, in beating Pittamsariya bad gentry Mallesh and in punishing a culprit who was collecting money in the name of party in Chipurupalli in Meliaputti mandal after putting him on trial in a people's court. She also participated in the annihilation of a police informer in Uddanam. She participated in the destruction of government and private property, especially some liquor shops on the occassion of state bandh in 1996.

She did PT, drill in the squad daily. This gave her confidence in conducting so many military actions.

She had a melodious voice and her songs inspired the people. Due to her cultural talents and interest, she was selected as a student for the JNM workshop in 1996. She learnt cultural skills in this camp with determination.

This determination can be seen in her life in all aspects. Of the 13 comrades who came from Janasakthi, only she and Chittekka stood firm and others went back. Such was her commitment towards the oppressed people.

She learnt to read and write in the party and due to her determined efforts she started reading books within a short period. She never wasted time. She always tried to learn new things. She was very straight forward in criticism and self-criticism and in correcting her mistakes.

In June 1997 she married the deputy commander of her squad. It was a love marriage. She helped him in correcting his mistakes and understood him well. She died within six months of her marriage.

Though Sandhya died young, her inspiration will remain forever in our hearts and it will guide us in our future actions.

Comrade Madvi Linge

Martyrdom : 1997

Eighty families of Koya community reside in Kanchal village of Pamed Range in Basagudem area under South Bastar Division. Comrade Katta Linge born in this village grew up doing hard labour like any other tribal women. Even today when literacy is very less in women, particularly in tribal women, Linge Nano born 30 years ago could not have any chance to hold slate and pencil. Though she had no chance of getting education inside the four walls of the house, she understood the life of masses profoundly. Born and brought up in the forest Linge used to roam in forest for collecting the forest produce. She used to collect forest products like mahua, *tore*, fruits of *chaar* etc in season. She was so busy in plucking tendu leaves in the season that she did not get time to rest even for a while. After handing over the bundles of tendu leaves to the *kalledar* she received whatever price he gave her, silently. All the hard working tribals dwelling in forest had to bear this kind of injustice. Comrade Linge's life was also similar to this. Besides it, Linge used to plough the fields in her early teens. There, all the capable young children, both boys and girls have to plough the fields, otherwise they will not get enough to eat. They depend on forest for their survival, but that forest is not theirs. They know this fact, but they don't know that it has been 'extorted' from them. This is the handiwork of this system. The credit for this goes to the 'theory of *karma*'. Linge was married off at a young age in to a Madaavi family. She became the mother of a child. Both husband and wife laboured hard to run their home but due to illness her life partner died. In spite of it, without losing courage, putting faith in her hard labour and depending upon mother forest, she started bringing up her daughter. In spite of having chances of getting married again (tribal tradition permitted this) she was not ready for this. In course of time she joined the KAMS. Linge was very much inspired by the way the women were getting organised in KAMS day by day in large numbers and participated in struggles in South Bastar Division. After participating in the seminar organised on the problems of tribal women, many thoughts arose in her mind. The seminars on women presented a new life before the women suffocating in the cage of tribal customs and traditions for generations and Linge became a part of it. Taking part in women's struggles, she held aloft the Red flag with a white star (the flag of KAMS) on it. Accepting fully the programme and constitution of KAMS,

Linge was elected the president of Kandal village KAMS. She tried to improve her life in this light. She never left production work at home and did extra labour for the activities of the organization.She worked day and night for mobilising all village women into the organization and implementing the decisions of the EC among them. When her baby became a little older, Linge got some more time at home whereby she accepted the responsibility of the president of Range committee. Seeing her ability in leading the organization, women from villages like Badisham, Muntam, Palagudem, Gundraju etc nearby villages, elected her for Range Committee. Entering into the organization with the aim of making revolution along with the objective of women's liberation, Linge accepted and fulfilled every responsibility given to her commendably. Linge used to plan the programmes for KAMS in Pamed Range for successfully commemorating the 'martyrs' week', which was organised every year in DK from 28th July to 3rd August. She herself used to take up propaganda campaign taking some women along with her for at least one week in which she upheld the sacrifices of brave warriors who were martyred fighting against the enemy. She used to request the people to realize the dreams of martyrs. In the same way, as soon as March 8th approached, there is a tradition of celebrating ' International Women's Day' as a struggle day by units of KAMS in DK. Likewise Linge also used to lead the units in Pamed range in organising 'March 8th ' on large scale. She did not leave any stones unturned in making it successful. At such occasions, she herself sang songs and enthused people. Apart from such important political propaganda programmes, Linge Nano had played a memorable role in the struggles waged by KAMS in Pamed Range.

On 27th January 1997, DK Special Zonal Committee of CPI (ML) (People's War) gave a call for 'DK bandh. The Party called upon the people to oppose severe repression by the exploitative government upon the people who were fighting for their problems in DK. The revolutionary mass organization also supported this call. The Party in association with mass organizations called on the struggling people of Andhra, North Telangana and DK to fight against the joint attacks by the governments of Andhra, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa. For making it successful, Linge Nano did rasta roko at Pamed-Basagudem road, taking nearly 60 members of KAMS with her. The troop of women carrying babies, equipped with spades, crowbars and sticks, proceeded under the leadership of Linge Nano. They deputed a sentry on both sides of the road and completed

their programme successfully. On 23rd May 1997, the people of whole DK celebrated the 30th anniversary of Naxalbari with high fighting spirit. Linge participated in the meeting organised as a part of it at Mettagudem in South Bastar Division. In that meeting, she gave an inspiring speech in the presence of hundreds of people. She said in her speech that our tribals had lost their lives in Naxalbari and were fighting continuously against oppression. In her attractive and zealous speech given in Gondi, she asked the people to continue the legacy of the tribal warriors. The tribals generally live in famine conditions. Even after 58 years of so-called independence, no improvement has come in their lives under these plundering governments. The people organising themselves into militant organizations for improving their lives on their own are achieving some change. That is why people love the organization. They have full confidence in organization. Masses are the base of the organization. The mass organizations going head in this path took up many struggles to overcome the famine situation in Bastar in 1997. By forming the antifamine struggle committee, these organizations exposed the carelessness of government on the famine problem of tribal people and demanded sufficient aid. On the other side, using limited resources in the district, they collected funds and helped the people in the days of famine. The KAMS had played a good role in it. Linge worked tirelessly to carry on these programmes in Pamed Range. Not only this, while she herself was eating only one meal a day, she distributed four sacks of grain to the people, which she had stored in her house for future needs. Serving the people was like a habit to her. Linge died due to snakebite in winter season of 1997. She was sleeping in her house at night when a snake bit .The life of tribals is full of dangers. In these villages, where there is lack of minimum medical facilities, people dying with diseases, snakebites and during childbirth are very common. Even after half a century of socalled independence, the ruling classes are unable to provide them minimum facilities and are playing with their lives. They have very less opportunities of getting education. Medical facilities are not available even at far away places. They are suffering with extreme poverty. They don't get any help from the government. Until this system remains, no change will come in the life of the tribals. That's why our Linge Nano holding the red flag fought for changing this system. She led the organization and put new ideals before us. Ultimately she fell prey to this inhuman system.

In memory of their dear leader the villagers of Kanda built a memorial

column. Every year, on July 28th, people pay homage to her remembrance at the memorial. She was a good friend, loving comrade of the guerrillas working in that region and also guarded them like the pupil of her eye. The guerrillas of that region paid their humble homage in her memory and expressed deep condolences to her family. On the day when we realize the dreams of Linge, and end this bloodthirsty system, the lives of people will improve. For this, we have to fight in the light of the goals of martyrs.

Comrade Punnai

Martyrdom : 1997

Comrade Punnai born in Gotia village of Atagarh Tehsil under North Bastar division was brought up by her brother as her parents died in her childhood. As land became insufficient in their ancestral village, their family came and settled in this village. When the organization was built up in the village, Punnai was still a girl. She had a close relationship with guerrilla squad since childhood. She became the member of organization in 1995 and was elected to the Executive Committee in 1997. She put in good efforts to build KAMS by mobilising women. When the girls of tribal community go for dancing in Diwali and Poos months, males usually misbehaved with them. It was a common feature. Punnai waged struggle against it. Explaining to the people about the difficulties suffered by women due to *gotul* culture, she participated zealously in the campaign to end the exploitation of women under the gotul system. She participated enthusiastically in the rally organised at Kiskoddo against the distorted culture of gotul. She completed every work given by the local party by putting in full efforts. Always smiling and jovial, she mingled with everybody. One day in 1997, after providing food for the guerrilla squad, which had come to her village, she fell asleep at her home. A snake bit her at night and caused her untimely death. The revolutionary women's movement of North Bastar had lost a rising mass leader, a zealous revolutionary young woman!

Comrade Janjanam Savithri

Martyrdom : 21-12-1997

Savithri was born in a poor family in Polavaram of Krishna district in 1967. She was an intelligent child and so her parents tried to educate her well in spite of economic difficulties. She studied till Intermediate in Mangalagiri of Guntur district. Though some people argued that girls should do only soft natured jobs, she chose to join engineering course. Thus she opposed the role models propagated by this feudal society. She came to Visakhapatnam for doing her B.E.

She stayed in the ladies' hostel and fought the reactionary, upper caste forces among the women students. She stood up and gave support to the girls who were ragged or sexually harassed. She vehemently opposed ragging and caste discrimination especially by the Kamma caste girls who tried to dominate everywhere including mess hall. Due to these rebel qualities, she was naturally attracted towards revolutionary politics. She came into contact with the party during a women's seminar conducted by RWA in 1987 and gradually came closer. She played an active role in the launching of women's organization in Visakha and turned the ladies hostel into one of its strongholds. Room no. 52 became one of the addresses of the women's organization. Naturally she was elected as the leader of the hostel twice in succession. As the ladies representative, she fought the corruption in mess and the authoritative attitudes of the warden. In 1990 RSU could once again come out in the open due to the legal opportunities and she became active in it. She was active in all the struggles led by it, both as an activist and its leader. She vehemently opposed the casteism prevalent in Andhra University and was naturally in the forefront in the pro-mandal agitation. She belonged to the weaver community and from her childhood she developed awareness about the caste oppression and discrimination

which is prevalent in the Indian feudal society.

As soon as she joined the university she led the movement for the implementation of recommendations of Murlidhara Rao commission. She was in the forefront in exposing the corruption of university officials and the so called student leaders.

She participated in the agitations against evacuation of slum dwellers with other mass organizations and showed how students should care for the problems of the people. She was in the forefront in all the agitations against atrocities on women and dowry deaths. She participated in the discussion forums of women's organizations and gave speeches in many of their meetings. She played a key role in the agitation of the university students against the Tsundur massacre of dalits by upper caste landlords. She hoisted the black flag in the place of the tri-color flag as a protest on August 15. Though the hostel authorities threatened her, she was not deterred and went ahead with the hoisting. The slogans she shouted in the procession on the same day expressing solidarity to the Tsundur dalits still reverberate on the Visakha roads.

She became a PR in 1992 while still studying in the university. She worked as a lecturer in Gandhi Institute of Technology and Management (Gitam) for some days after completing her M.E. and played an active role in all the progressive struggles and guided them. She worked secretely for six years as a central organizer of the party and led many struggles.

In all the struggles of the students against the corruptions and anti-student policies of wardens, VCs and in all other student agitations, Savithri was the motivating force behind. Many pamphlets and posters drafted by her inspired the students a lot. When a woman student activist's name was written on walls in an obscene manner with the backing of the university authorities, there was a student agitation and finally they could extract an apology. When one professor sexually harassed a student, the students agitated and dishonored him publicy. Savithri guided these agitations. She was such an expert organizer that she guided a cover women's organization in the university without anyone getting any smell of it as a party organization.

Savithri played a key role in the Visakha city organization. She displayed good initiative in taking decisions on any kind of problem. She displayed responsibility in their implementation too. She married Com. Bhaskar. (He later worked as Visakha city secretary and was killed by the

police in a fake encounter on April 16, 1999). This couple guided many agitations in the city.

She participated as a delegate in the city party conference held in 1996 and played an active role. She conducted deep discussions on the documents. She put forth her views on which sections to work among in the city to strenghthen it and also how the city movement should stand in support of the rural movement.

She was co-opted into the AP state Mahila Co-ordination Committee (a sub-committee) in 1997 to contribute in the building of the women's movement in the state. This was in recognition of her constant efforts in the building of women's movement in Visakha and also her keen understanding regarding the women's question. She went to Salwapur village for the sub-committee meeting (tragically her first and last meeting). This village is in Warangal district but a Medak district squad looks after it and the meeting was being held under the protection of that squad. The police got concrete information about the shelter and attacked them on the night of December 21, 1997. Unarmed Savithri was injured in that attack and was caught by the police. They tortured her along with another injured comrade Prasad and killed both of them in cold blood.

A true people's intellectual and agitator-organizer, who dedicated her life for the oppressed people was killed in the most brutal manner by the fascist Chandrababu Naidu police. She held high the red flag in the Andhra University in the legacy of another bright student of AU - Bommareddy Snehaltha who was killed in a fake encounter during emergency. The people of Visakha and the AU students will never forget these two bright, intellectual women who laid down their lives for their liberation.

Comrade Ramwati Naroti

Martyrdom : .....

The village Kattejhari of Tipragarh squad area under Gadchiroli Division is a village of Gond tribal. Kattejhari faced many difficulties in the repression cycle started by police in Gadchiroli between 1992 and 1997. Apart from DAKMS and KAMS in that village, 'Adivasi Bal Sangathan' also fell victim to the police attacks. The people dithering in that period of excessive repression handed over their resignations from mass organizations to the police, though temporarily. Police needed only those papers and numbers. Besides Kattejhari, police unleashed terror in many villages for obtaining those papers. Very soon, people proved through their struggles that the written papers, which they handed over to the police, were not written from their hearts. The people who suffered police repression not only learnt to make the struggles successful by misleading the beastly khaki forces, but also learnt to guard the guerrilla squads like the pupils of their eyes. The daily repression only made them stronger and they regained courage to organize again. During this period, the people started organizing again in several villages; similarly, in Kattejhari also by 1994-95, girls like Ramwati Naroti started thinking again. Remembering those days when she provided food and water to the guerrillas with her little hands, she again started going to the shelters in the forests for meeting the guerrillas secretly. On one side, there were arrests, torture and the news of youngsters falling victim to the bullets in fake encounters while on the other side, she heard all kinds of news about comrades who fled from the battlefield losing confidence on people and revolutionary theory. In such conditions, the village elders forbade their children from going to the forests so that they do not lose them. They were afraid that if there would be an encounter with police forces in the forest, even the children would not be spared (on 8th July 1993, when a child of class IIIrd went to give food to guerrillas in Tippragarh area he was shot dead by the police beasts.) But children never stepped back from the struggle. They continued performing their role. Ramwati Naroti was one of those.

When Ramwati grew a little elder, and her knowledge increased she expressed her wish before the guerrillas to dedicate herself to the revolutionary movement. She said very clearly in her discussion with guerrilla comrades that she also wanted to become a guerrilla and wanted

to revolt against this plundering and cruel system. By then, she had developed from 'Bal Sangatan' to KAMS. She was then 18 years old and quite capable for guerrilla life. But the local area committee of party did not approve her proposal. It placed the needs of the revolutionary movement before Ramwati that she should organize more women while remaining in the village KAMS. As the women of the village had already elected Ramwati as their president, Party requested her to remain amidst them for some more time to lead them. It was the strong desire of Ramwati to become a guerrilla but party wanted her to take up the responsibility of organization in the village. It was a test for her. Brought up in the company of guerrillas from childhood Ramwati was a disciplined girl. By accepting the decision of party, she proved that the party's decisions would be foremost in her life. Participating as a delegate in Murumgaon Range conference of KAMS, Ramwati fulfilled her responsibility very efficiently. One betrayer informed the police that Ramwati was going go join guerrilla squad. The police descended upon Kattejhjari. Police called the headmen of village, and put pressure on them to marry off all the young girls of the village. They arrested the parents of Ramwati forcing them to perform her marriage immediately. As a result she had to get married under compulsion. She went on saying that she was not ready to get married and perform the duties of a housewife. But who would listen to her cries?

After some days, she became pregnant. When a woman conceives in a adivasi community, she would be on the threshold of death till the birth of the child. A woman rears an infant in her womb amidst many risks. Giving birth to a child is equal to rebirth for them as they are deprived of medical facilities and scientific understanding in those villages. This reality once again comes forth in the tragic case of Ramawati. Until this distorted system, which is playing with the lives of countless mothers and the infants growing in their wombs, is not overthrown, there is no guarantee for the lives of poor mothers and their infants. After completion of nine months, Ramwati was unable to bear the pains and could not deliver the child and breathed her last. The martyrdom of our Ramwati once again emphasized the need to fight for the demand of welfare of mother and child. This is a murderous system; it is diseased and distorted. The oppressed people can improve their lives only by fighting against this system. The life histories of immortal martyrs will always inspire us in this task. Following the ideals of people's martyrs, we will accomplish their incomplete goals.

Comrade Lakshmi (Srilatha)

Martyrdom : 24-02-1998

In February, 1998, the Station Ghanpur squad and the Devannapet mini guerilla squad had actively participated in the election boycott campaign as the mid term parliamentary elections were scheduled then. They had attacked the police in Kondapur and had taken shelter near the Nerellavagu (stream) between the Venkatadripeta and Gundla Singaram villages on 23-02-1998. The police came to know of their whereabouts from an informer and attacked them on 24-02-1998 at 4 p.m. The squads immediately retaliated bravely and fought for about two hours. The defence team comrades had resisted the enemy heroically and laid down their lives thus saving the lives of their fellow comrades. Without a moment's hesitation, they fulfilled their responsibility the party had given them as a defence team and had etched their names in the annals of the Indian revolution. Com. Lakshmi was one of the martyrs of Nerellavagu.

Lakshmi was born in the Vadithela village of Chityal in a middle class family. She was attracted towards the revolutionary activities conducted in her village. Four persons from her village were working in the party as full time activists and it also had an impact on her. Gradually she began meeting the squad secretely and started working. Her family did not allow her to work in the Sangam. They were trying to marry her off. But she opposed such efforts and joined the movement as a full timer in 1997 March. She put great efforts to learn to read and write well in the squad. She worked in the Parakala squad at first and in October 1997, she was transferred to the Station Ghanpur squad. Within a few days of her joining the Parakala squad, the police attacked them. She took her weapon and escaped alone from the scene of encounter. She contacted the squad through the Sangam leaders and joined them again. She never showed any fear or wavering in facing the enemy. Even in the Nerellavagu firing, though she had no weapon, she was not afraid and tried to escape with other comrades who were giving cover firing. She succeeded to a large extent but in the last minute she was hit by an enemy bullet from behing and died there.

Though her revolutionary life was short, Lakshmi will always be remembered by the people for her spirit and dedication.

Chadmal Martyrs

Martyrdom : 04-02-1998

Comrade Bharati

On February 4, 1998 the police came in large numbers into the Chadmal forests and attacked the Banswada squad in Nizamabad district. In this attack, seven comrades including DCM Salim had died. Women comrades Bharati, Devakka and Vijayalakshmi were martyred here.

Bharati was the daughter of a sympathizer in Banswada town. She was the youngest among the Chadmal martyrs. She met the squad comrades when they visited her home and developed affection for them. She used to read party news in papers and listened to news daily. She used to did some works given by the party and stayed for some days with the squad. Just 4 days before the Chadmal encounter she had come to meet the squad and stayed with them. She died in that attack.

Comrade Devakka (Sarada)

Com. Devakka was born in Kothapalli village of Kammarpalli mandal, Nizamabad district She was in contact with the party from 1998. She was married off at a young age. Her husband opposed her working for the party. She could not bear the harassment of her husband and was even prepared to give divorce to him. She divorced him and joined the guerilla squad in 1996. She learnt to read and write in the party with great determination. Due to ill health she surrendered in the end of 1996. But she continued to work in VMS. As the repression on her increased, she came into the squad and within two days she died in the Chadmal encounter.

Comrade Vijayalakshmi (Latha)

Com. Vijayalakshmi was born in the Markal village of Sadasivnagar mandal, Nizamabad district in a poor family. She worked in the village women's organization. Though her family opposed her working in the Sangam, she not only continued to work in the organization but also decided to join the squad as a full timer. In the squad, she learnt to read and write in the squad. She took military training and worked as the member of the front guard. While in Sircilla squad, she participated courageously in the opportunity ambush in Konaraopet. A SI was killed in that ambush. After she was transferred to the Banswada squad, she died in the Chadmal encounter.

Comrade Bhuvari Emeshwari (Kamala)

Martyrdom : 11-03-1998

The ancestors of comrade Kamala came from Durg district of Bastar in search of livelihood and settled in the Dubey Umar village where she was born. Kamala was born in a higher-middle class family of Uraon tribal community. She completed her matriculation and got a job as an Assistant mid wife in Bijapur Project Area after completing her studies at Jagdalpur. Later her parents got her married. But when inhuman tortures at her husband's house became unbearable,

Emeshwari (her name at home) became a guerrilla with the inspiration of revolutionary politics. She was determined to destroy patriarchy. It was the month of September, 1987. Kamala started guerrilla life as a member of Madded squad at the age of 20. Male domination insulted her at every step, she continued a determined fight for equal rights. She understood that it was possible only with the revolutionary party. Kamala who responded immediately on the women's problems never failed to criticize the atrocities of male village heads on tribal women in the name of 'traditions'.

In 1990, she was transferred from Madded squad to Konta squad according to the needs of the Party. She got the membership of Party while fulfilling the responsibilities in the Konta squad for seven years. Seeing the increasing needs of the movement, she accepted every responsibility given by the Party without any hesitation. She also fulfilled the duty of Deputy Commander in the squad. On basis of the experience she achieved in the medical service as a nurse, she took training and became a good guerrilla doctor even while fulfilling organizational responsibilities. Kamala won the respect of all by rendering medical

services to the comrades who came to participate in the second conference of DK in 1995. After that, in July, Kamala learned many new treatments by participating as a student in the medical training camp held by the party. With that experience, she tried to correct misconceptions among comrades regarding health. She won the love of women comrades by giving suggestions on gynic problems to them from her experience. Kamala participated as a student in "the special political-military training camp for women" organised by the DK party with the objective of developing women in every field. Besides discussing the ordinary issues of the party during that period, she expressed her strong opinions about the problems of women working in the party and the army and discrimination against them, without any hesitation. She was always ready to learn from the experience of her fellow women comrades.

There was no such field which Kamala did not enter with determination. She also took interest in the fields of art and literature. She made herself acquainted to the readers of 'Jhankar' (A literary magazine of guerrilla writers of DK) under the name 'Sarovar'. Sarovar used to send literary material to 'Jhankar' regularly. Taking interest in literature, she also made great contributions to cultural programmes organised in DK at various occasions. She played various roles in plays. While fulfilling the responsibility of organiser of the 'Cultural and Literary Forum' arranged in the weekends during "special political military camp for women", she put life into the characters of the plays performed there. She was praised by every one for her acting abilities.

Kamala was given the charge of Gollapalli local guerrilla squad after getting elected as a member of Konta Squad Area Committee. She developed good relations with farmers, mainly peasant women and also students and workers of that region. Kamala laboured hard for the overthrow of the feudal - patriarchal society and the construction of new society by organising the masses through spreading revolutionary literature and politics among all oppressed classes of society. Kamala went to participate in Tallagudem raid together with her squad as per the decision of the Divisional Committee. She was happy on getting the opportunity to annihilate the enemy. The guerillas besieged the police station. During the battle she was injured and fell down. But she did not lose courage and did not leave the battle field. She fought till her last breath. It was 11th March 1998. The memories of dear comrade Kamala, who gave her life for the success of New Democratic Revolution and equality between man and woman, will always remain fresh.

Pavuralagattu Martyr
Comrade Santha

Martyrdom : 04-04-1998

The first covert incident in Andhra Pradesh took place in Pavurala Gattu in Nalgonda district. A covert named Somla Naik killed Santakka, her husband and Commander Ramanna and two more comrades even while injuring some more. After some years Somla died like a dog in the hands of the people. The people caught Somla who was carrying on criminal activities and troubling people finally beating him to death.

Com. Santha was born in Kambalapalli village in Nalgonda district. This was a strong movement village in the Krishnapatti area of the district. She worked in the women's organization when she was in the village. She was married at home. But her husband harassed her and she decided that she can fight against such male domination in her life and also in society by joining the revolutionary movement. So she decided to join the armed struggle. She was the first woman comrade to be recruited from that village. She got recruited in 1995. she was a frail woman and was a soft natured person. She looked innocent but her eyes shone with a thirst for knowledge. She not to read and write within three months after she joined the squad and it was this thirst for knowledge which made it possible. She even tried to write down her experiences. She tried to write poems and stories too, no small achievement for a woman of her background. She was straight forward in putting forth criticisms and had a proletarian outlook. She married Com. Ramanna in end 1997. he was the commander of Krishnapatti squad.

It is very sad to have lost a comrade like Santakka who was on the threshold of developing into a leader. Many comrades wrote poems and songs about her. One comrade remembered how she used to row the boat in the Krishna river. It seems even men comrades could not compete with her once when they had a competition. He wrote how frail she was yet how strong-willed too. Another poet described her as a stream which flowed to many villages organizing people. She had won the love of the people of her area and they vowed to avenge the deaths of their dear comrades.